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THE
ROMAN
CAMPAGNA

G. E. THOMPSON

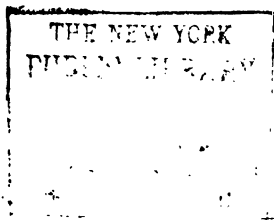
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AROUND
THE
ROMAN CAMPAGNA

BY
GEORGE E. THOMPSON
Author of "Spring at the Italian Lakes" &c.

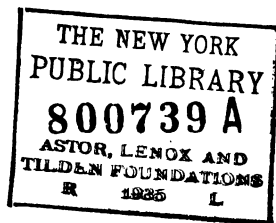
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

LIVERPOOL
EDWARD HOWELL CHURCH STREET
LONDON
SIMPKIN MARSHALL & CO. STATIONERS HALL COURT

1893

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P R E F A C E .

THE experience gained some years ago during a week spent in Rome, sight-seeing all day and studying guide-books at night, taught me the wisdom of leaving such a mode of procedure to the Americans. They carry it to perfection, driving round, doing the churches, inspecting the ruins, and interviewing the celebrities, ticking them off their lists after the manner of canvassing a constituency.

Repeated visits have taught me a better method. The tourist should explore the riches of Rome for a day or two at a time, and then take a holiday in the country, to return refreshed and invigorated. The smiling Campagna and the blue distant mountains are before him ; the cascades of Tivoli, the villas of Frascati, the lakes of the Alban Hills. Let him leave the noise and heat of Rome, wander in the woods of Tusculum, listen to the song of the nightingales, and

VIII.

the rippling music of fountains. Let him look at distant Rome through the pearly haze of a spring morning, and prepare for the next attack, thus avoiding mental congestion as he would Roman fever.

The substance of this book has appeared in the weekly columns of a local paper; it embraces somewhat more than its title indicates, carrying the reader beyond the confines of the Roman Campagna to many a mountain top, from which he may gaze on the glorious land of Italy, spread out as a map below him; or descend to explore in detail some of the unfrequented tracks and quaint old-world cities on the spurs of the Apennines.

G. E. THOMPSON.

BIRKENHEAD.

Dec.. 1892.

AROUND THE ROMAN CAMPAGNA.

CHAPTER I.

ORVIETO.

“For this was a century in which the fine arts and the higher mechanical arts were not separated by any distinct boundary, nor were those who practised them : and it was an age in which artists sought out and loved one another.”—*The Cloister and the Hearth*.

I was in Orvieto, enjoying the calm, balmy air of an April morning, with the cloudless blue of an Italian sky. It matters not how I had reached the grand old city on its precipitous crags ; there I was after a long journey. Set down late at night at the foot of the hill, in pitch darkness, I felt as though my last friend had left when the train steamed off on its way to Rome. I was soon deposited in the car of a funicular railway, was dragged up a steep incline and through a dark tunnel, to be dumped into a small guard room at the top. After a long wait, a gloomy, prison-van kind of 'bus came to the rescue ; I was packed inside with my effects, and was conveyed through silent, stony, dark streets, to the Hotel Belle Arti, where a huge double-bedded chamber — feebly illuminated by a solitary

candle—received me. Having examined all the doors and cupboards, and looked under the beds, I concluded that it would be safe to retire, was soon buried in oblivion, and awoke with the early sunlight and the noise of men and of animals, to find it Saturday and market morning.

Being, as usual, on a tour of picture making, my heart leapt at the rustic sounds. Breakfast was soon despatched, and I stood on the ramparts of the old city walls, gazing spell-bound on an unwonted sight. The whole land of Italy seemed to lie below ; hills and mountains receded one behind the other, fading into grey mist. The river Paglia flowed below the tawny coloured tufa cliffs upon which Orvieto stands, the cliffs descending precipitously to the steep grassy slopes, and in the valleys were old monasteries, farms, tombs, and pretty sylvan scenery. From the grand old ruined castle and its ponderous gateways, a long zig-zag road led down to the river side where Ponte Paglia spans the stream, and ever and anon long strings of mules arrived, laden with charcoal, their swarthy drivers walking behind, and singing the melancholy dirges of their forest homes. There were donkeys laden with fagots, and with various goods for the busy market, and the gay contadinas, dressed in many gaudy hues, sat on the beasts or walked by their sides, laughing and singing as they came. It was a gay and winsome sight,

and many a turn in the road gave its picture, not least as the country folk entered one of the sun-lit, high arched gateways, passing the blind beggar by the way-side, who raised his voice to invoke the blessings of the saints on the charitable. And anon the great squares within the city were filled with buyers and sellers, and all was in full swing. There were vast quantities of pots and pans, gay clothes, cheap, bad cutlery, followed by open sacks of farm produce amid crowds of long-cloaked country-men. In one of the piazzas there were numbers of donkeys laden with fagots; then there were stalls of fruits, sweets, and so on. As the morning wore on, the markets thinned, and the country folk returned to their far off homes, and many a well-to-do farmer, as he passed down the hill on his ambling steed, would have made a portrait of a highwayman of the good old days. Mules and asses descended, and leaving them, I turned up a narrow street to where, on an eminence, stands the cathedral,—the most noted specimen of architecture of its kind in all the artistic land of Italy. There, in the brilliant sunshine, glittered and shone the rich façade. Long centuries, instead of ruining the work, have enriched and ennobled it. The mosaics shine with the same lustre, the many statues are yet beautiful; the delicate carvings between and at the sides of the doorways are still sharp, and tell forth to the world their old Biblical

stories, beginning with the "Creation" and finishing with the "Last Judgment." The twisted pillars, their flutes filled up with brilliant mosaics, are all there. But to study the central gem, walk away to the long seat under the old houses opposite, and, sitting there in the shade, gaze on the rose window, the most beautiful of all rose windows—though that in the Cathedral of Carrara very nearly equals it—sit and gaze at this window and its frame of saints and carving, and the longer you look at it, the more like a piece of the finest carved ivory it becomes. When originally placed there it had not obtained its full beauty, but long years have imparted that mellow tone to glorify its old age.

Down below, on the steps, reclines a specimen of human nature, somewhat in keeping with the cathedral, and with garments nearly as antique as the rose window itself. He is but a beggar man, but to look at him, you may imagine that his mass of rags have come down to him from ancestors, who, one after the other, have reposed on the marble steps right under the rose window; his rags are beautiful, his face fine, and his long, yellow locks seem to partake of the old ivory. You cannot handle pitch without being defiled, nor can you lie for generations on the steps of a cathedral without being refined by its companionship and wonderful beauty. There are beggars *and* beggars,

but the garments of this old veteran must have been made for an ancestor who founded the trade when the rose window was yet young ; for one penny he assumed an attitude of dignity, folded his rags carefully and reverently about his figure, and stood—the prince of varlets !

Sunday mid-day saw me there again, but the beggar came not, and doubtless on that day he dines at his palace and rests from his labours. Service was going on in the cathedral. The congregation was mostly composed of country folk, who stood about in groups, listening, open-mouthed, to a sermon given in good polished Italian. When I entered, the priest was warning his hearers that they were all going to the devil, and were on the road to perdition, “*Strada Perdizione*,” and that *now* was the hour. All this he urged most earnestly ; and, indeed, the motley crew had the air of travellers along the *Strada Perdizione*, and, in good sooth, I think that the preacher was right, for they were a motley crew ; but inasmuch as I think that every man carries his own devil within him, if he be not careful to cast him out, I therein differ from the preacher.

After leaving the little knot of listeners I walked through the cathedral, past its massive pillars and statues, its beautiful font, its stained glass and its alabaster windows of rich browns—the like of which

are to be seen nowhere else. I walked outside into the sunlight, and looked at the large panel representing the "Last Judgment," where, in one part, the devils are depicted devouring and tormenting their victims. I pondered deeply and thought on the sermon, and the panels became a sermon to me, and raising my eyes to the rose window I beheld the beautiful stories told in the old coloured mosaics, and further up were the marble arcades, and the summit, pointing to the blue sky; and the sermon left the devils and the way to perdition, and climbed the lofty heights; and, surely, there are sermons in stones, and the old cathedral of Orvieto is full of them.

The next morning the sun looked again over the walls of Orvieto; it shone on the great gateway; it shone on a flock of goats, whose bells came tinkling up the slope. Further down a woman rested at a fountain, while her donkeys quenched their thirst at the long trough, before their last long pull up to the city. More than these I passed, and taking a turn along the grassy slope among the olive trees I followed a narrow devious path skirting the foot of the steep, yellow crags, already, in the early morning hours, radiating the heat of the sun. Here nothing disturbed the intense stillness save the song of birds and the hum of insects; but coming events cast their shadows before, and I had not proceeded far when I saw, lying in the narrow

path, the carcase of a dead viper. A dead viper is harmless enough, but soon I came to a dead green snake, measuring about four feet in length. And now I walked as one on hot stones, knowing what to expect. The path wound on round the yellow rock ; sometimes the precipice overhung, at other places there were caves and numerous holes. Hundreds of pretty green lizards darted about in the sunshine. I kept a good look out, and now I heard a hiss. It is not pleasant to be hissed at any time, but to be stopped in the narrow path and hissed wide-mouthed by a long, gliding, green snake is enough to make the stoutest heart quake and the longest hair stand on end "like quills upon the fretful porcupine." I argued not the right of way with him, but made as though I had an engagement at a monastery on the other side of the valley. He, with a parting hiss at my cowardice, retreated swiftly to his hole, and vanished under the rocks of Orvieto. I passed down through a farm, and met a small boy to whom, by pantomime, I described my adventure. He remarked "*Serpenata, horrida brutta ! morte,*" from which I inferred that he considered the creature to be a brute, whose bite meant death. Nevertheless the country folk are ignorant, and many of them think that the lizards are given at odd times to spitting fire, a fact contrary to all the natural history of those harmless reptiles. From this

I argue that it is probable the green snake was harmless, and only loathsome. Let the visitor to Orvieto by all means take this glorious morning walk under the crags, but let him keep a look out for snakes.

I soon reached the old monastery, with its half-ruined octagonal tower and its old sculptured buildings, now used as barns and outhouses ; its ancient fountain and marble trough, which might grace a nobleman's palace ; its surrounding woods, where the cyclamen carpets the ground with its red flowers, and where, framed by boughs, there are glimpses of distant Orvieto on its table rock.

And here we must take our leave, and travel a little further from the haunts of Englishmen, to locate ourselves for a few days in the city of fountains—Viterbo.

CHAPTER II.

VITERBO.

The Italian trains move slowly, but surely, and in course of time I arrived at Atigliano, the junction for Viterbo, a town lying on the mountain slopes about twenty-five miles from the main line between Florence and Rome. Having nearly two hours to wait at the junction, I set off under a scorching sun to explore the small town of Atigliano ; it was a poor, dirty little place, standing on a rock above the yellow Tiber ; but preferring the comparative coolness of the station, I returned and sat down among the rest of the rabble, and, for lack of employment, got out my opera glasses and studied a town and large castle on a distant hill. This excited curiosity, and many folk essayed to look through the glasses, and, although they persisted in closing one eye, and in holding them at a distance of six inches, the wonder and conversation were immense.

The latter part of the route to Viterbo lies over a plain, where are remains of Etruscan towns and tombs. The old city itself is walled round with exceedingly high walls, pierced by many gate-ways, and is renowned both for its fountains and for its pretty women. I put

up at the Albergo Schenardi, an old-fashioned hotel, with restaurant and café adjoining. The latter, a long, narrow room, opening on the street, is like a feeble, dirty, small imitation of Gatti's Restaurant, in the Strand, London. Having engaged a room, I sat down to a meal in the café. Stupid old waiter and I cannot understand each other, and so I have finished my coffee before any eatables come—except bread. I want a carte or list, but forget what it is called, and of course, the phrase book ignores such trifles. At last macaroni makes its appearance, and the old waiter walks off before I have time to speak to him, but catching the eye of another rascal, I learn that it is "lista" that I require. The old man writes me one out; no doubt many dishes are down, but the "lista" is illegible. The old waiter is lame and the knees of the other man smite together as he walks. I am going to educate that lame old man, and make him leap as an hart, before I have done with him.

April 4th.—The day has been absolutely perfect, without a cloud, and now at 6-30, after taking thirty-four photos, I am seated in the café for a meal, and for diary writing. Viterbo, like the weather, is also perfect. It is certainly a city of fountains. I have seen a few "real beauties" among the women; some of the children are delightfully fascinating, and there is a handsome young cobbler working at a shop door close

to, whose portrait I should much like to have, but I don't like to ask him to sit. I have secured a few groups, and when taken, the folk come to look through the camera, and seem quite astonished and aggrieved that they themselves do not appear. There are numbers of good-looking, gentlemanly young fellows about, and the folk generally look thriving and happy. The town seems, at a distance, to stand on a sloping plain, but, in reality it is very hilly, reminding one of Edinburgh in that respect. The fine old Palazzo Publico faces the principal Piazza ; a handsome corridor runs along the front, and an arched passage through the building leads to a quiet garden in a courtyard behind, beautified by a handsome old fountain, balustrade, several ancient sarcophagi, with half obliterated figures reposing on the lids, and there are carved Papal escutcheons on the walls. The view is extensive and beautiful ; churches, houses, and the walls of Viterbo form a back-ground to gardens and buildings which lie immediately below the terrace at a considerable depth. There are many half-ruined square towers dotted throughout Viterbo ; these were probably built for defence, but now are merely picturesque monuments, imparting to the place—with the old streets and buildings—an air, as of a city finished many centuries ago, that has never been touched since. The streets are innocent of footpaths, and are paved with huge blocks in swallow-tail design.

Each stone is eight inches thick, and some of them are more than six feet in length. The shops are of the genuine patriarchal type, where the owner and his assistants make their wares ; at a cutler's a man sits making knives ; they may not be good, but he makes them. Wood-workers, saddlers, spinners, shoemakers, are all at it ; and at the barber's you can have your hair cut while you wait. I bought a padlock made by the man who sold it to me, and why did I buy it ? Because the rod of my basket broke in the eyehole ; a tinsmith sitting at his window mended it most neatly, yet he only had a pan of charcoal wherewith to heat his soldering iron. I gave him twopence, and he said it was "troppo" (too much), and he would not take anything ; his boy sitting under the eye of his master, followed suit, and also refused it ; and yet, perchance, like Gehazi of old, he might have run after me but that I left the money on the bench. The tinsmith blushed and looked quite uneasy. I valued much that man's kind, honest work, but I had to carry that rod half round the town, and to lay it down each time I set up the camera. I was being "compagniad" by two delightful little boys (one, a beauty about eight, with black eyes, and a brigand hat and feather) ; they took me to a very old and deliriously artistic and beautiful part of the town, where the folk swarmed like rats, and I got excited and left that rod, hence the extra padlock.

Having photographed my boys and a heap of other folk I departed, and discovering my loss (why do these nasty Italians snort and spit to such a horrible extent, and in a café too ?) I returned again to that low quarter, and advertised the missing iron.

I cannot complain of prices at the hotel ; the bedroom is 1s. 8d. per day, and, as all meals are taken either in the restaurant or in the café, and paid for at the time, living in Viterbo is cheap. You cannot dine in the café, or take tea in the restaurant, and to get what I want causes the deaf, blind, lame old man much tribulation, and a good deal of amusement to both of us, and occasional words so high that other visitors have to come to our help.

There are many squares and open spaces in Viterbo, and all these are beautified by fountains, mostly of stone, with large circular basins ; they are handsome, and, in some instances, so old that the ornaments are almost worn away. Near the hotel there is a fine fountain, where lions spout forth the water from their mouths ; hard by the cathedral—where a very ancient bridge crosses over a deep road—there is a fountain, in which the centre ornaments are worn to a stone stump, but it still supplies water to the many women who come to linger and gossip around its basin. Within the cathedral there are two rows of grey stone pillars with varied capitals, more or less grotesque. The

custodian was helpful and kind, and much amusement was caused by an old gentleman, evidently a little wrong in his head; the custodian wished to prevent him from crossing the church. This was more than he could understand, and he laughed so much that he set the custodian, myself, and the assembled small boys all off, and we made merry and were glad.

Viterbo is large, and contains much variety among its buildings and scenery; adjoining the cathedral is the old Episcopal palace, with a long hall containing portraits of certain Popes, many of whom were elected here. A great valley runs around this portion of the city, and market gardens and orchards flourish. Steep, dirty, narrow streets descend thereto, and it is in the densest part that you will find many quaint arches and rare old architecture. Over on the other side of the valley there are rocks and caves, and above these a street runs, which commands fine views of the town, its many towers and churches. The old red walls surround the whole, and here you may revel among ivy-grown, half-ruined towers, which stand at intervals and in great variety, in the circuit of the walls. Or, leaving the city by one of its numerous gateways, you can walk round to the next, thus obtaining glimpses of the massive stone walls and of the volcanic rocks, which, in places, form its foundations. There are old lava beds full of contortions and hollows, caused by

the pent-up gases as they issued hot, thousands of years ago. Over all, the wall-flower and many a pretty creeper flourish, and the green lizards run about the warm stones.

Re-entering at Porta Firontina, we find a large military castle guarding the gate-way, and a fine old fountain, reached by many steps, stands in the centre of the great piazza. Then comes the great church of S. Francesco with its outside pulpit; a steep street here descends the hill; this is the chief shopping street and winds on till it reaches the cathedral. A funeral procession is coming up, adding greatly to the picturesqueness of the scene, for there are twenty or more brown-robed Capuccin friars who walk slowly two by two. It has passed on towards the Campo Santo without the city gate, and I forbore to set up the camera, for there are bounds, and I draw the line at funerals; but it was a picturesque procession and my heart felt sore at missing it. Perhaps it may be made up to me some day, but I doubt it.

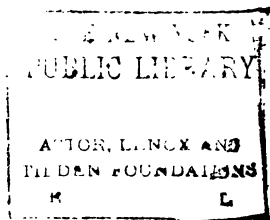
There is an interesting old sarcophagus of marble facing the street in the wall of a church; its bas-relief representing a lion contending with a boar. In the words of Dennis, "an inscription shows it to have been raised in honour of a Viterbian damsel of the twelfth century, who had such extraordinary beauty, that, like Helen, she became the cause of a war. On her account

the city was besieged by the Romans ; and after unsuccessful assaults they agreed to raise the siege, on condition that the fair Galiana displayed her charms from the ramparts—an instance of ‘the might, the majesty of loveliness’ never surpassed in any age.”

Outside one of the gates of the city there is the church of S. Maria Verita, with beautiful old cloisters. The country round Viterbo abounds in interesting scenery—towns and monasteries, easily reached by train, or by taking a carriage for the day. I made two or three such excursions, and will, in the next chapter, relate some of my adventures in this part of the country where I did not meet with one Englishman, or hear any English spoken.

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CHAPTER III.

TO CAPRAROLA.

"Pleasant it was, when woods were green,
And winds were soft and low,
To lie amid some sylvan scene
Where, the long drooping boughs between,
Shadows dark and sunlight sheen
Alternate come and go."

Longfellow.

After a good morning's work in old Viterbo, I felt inclined for a quiet afternoon in the country. Accordingly, after selecting a pleasant-looking young driver, and chartering his carriage by the hour, I set off towards the hills, and presently arrived at the old monastery of La Quercia, whose plain façade faces a large piazza, wherein stands a fine stone fountain. Over the church doors there are white Robbia figures. I asked the porter of the monastery to permit me to photograph the cloister, whereupon—having locked my things up in a room—he took me up many stairs into the religious quiet of a long corridor, where were cells innumerable. The porter left me in the silent place; a white robed old father came noiselessly down the passage, entered his cell, and the closing door echoed and re-echoed all along the corridor, dying away in a silence as of the tomb. I peopled each cell with a

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good old monk buried in prayer and in contemplation—I thought that there must be hundreds of them in so large a place. My conductor returned with a benevolent, sad-looking old father, who, after asking me into his cell, soon granted the necessary permission.

We had a little conversation about the monastery; I said I supposed that there must be a large number of brethren there, judging from its size. He sighed, and said it was not so; that when he—the head of this Franciscan monastery—came there ten years ago, there were only nineteen, and now there were but eight; that the government allowed them to remain for the rest of their lives, and that then it would cease to be a monastery. I asked if the government were going to use it for barracks, as they have done in so many instances. Alas, he knew not, and shrugged his shoulders in a hopeless way. So I found Father Antoninus, and felt sad to think of those forlorn eight old men dropping off one by one, with no one to fill their places.

Truly, “The old order changeth, yielding place to new.”

The grey old cloisters in two storeys, with a centre well, were very fine, and the fretted carvings threw their twisted forms, shadowing the sunlight of the quiet corridors. And anon my guide took me to another and a larger cloister garden, where grew lemon and orange trees, and where many flowers scented the hot, still air;

where a grand old fountain bubbled up to the melancholy sound of "Only eight old men are left;" and as I worked, a white garb appeared at an upper open window, and a serene old face looked out, to whom I doffed my hat with reverence, receiving a graceful bow in return. But my chariot waited; the porter was a pleasant man, and to him I promised photos. when I should send to Father Antoninus: (the Fates grant they may be good ones!) He was beside himself with joy, smiting me on the back and shouting, "Brava! brava!" and, as I left, Father Antoninus came out and shook me by the hand, and I saw him no more.

From thence my way lay through a pleasant land, skirting the hills, with a wide blue and golden landscape stretching afar, and soon we came to the ancient village of Bagnaia, just over against a steep ravine, up whose rocky side the houses climb; and there were high walls, and among them was an ancient gate-way and a great high round-tower. These fronted a large piazza with a fountain, and brilliant with the many colours of brigands, children, and mules. It was, in good sooth, a winsome sight! and, passing through, we climbed a steep, narrow street, and came to where were the great iron gates of a beautiful garden, belonging to a prince, who allows free access to all comers; in consequence of which a pestilent and low

born churl, with three boys, walked in with me on purpose to annoy me by their senseless explanations and ceaseless prattle. "This," the churl informed me, "was a fountain, that a terrace, and these were trees," and so on. I attained to high words, and nearly came to blows, all to no purpose, and at last I fairly ran from him, and dodged him into the trackless wilds of a deep wood, where the tender, pink cyclamen and the blue periwinkle reared their lovely heads, and where the scented violet perfumed the air. And when the churl was lost, I returned by another way to the fountains, the rivulets, terraces, and ponds, and thought on these things calmly, and, having never seen their equal, no not even in dreams, I concluded that I was little short of an idiot in only having two plates left, wherewith to picture all these things. My soul still hankers after that garden of gardens, for the terraces were moss-grown, the stonework all brown and amphibious, the wide flight of steps equal to those of Haddon Hall, and the fountains of wondrous and exquisite beauty, and of great age withal. From the terrace, giant trees spread their arms and met over the old balustrades, enclosing a wide, distant sunset view in golden haze, with the tower and village below, doing their duty as middle distance. The waters rippled and sang, and at last I enjoyed it alone, for the churl (the compagna), having lost me in the trackless wilds of the forest, and knowing

well that I would return, had posted himself at the entrance gates to salute me as I went out. I cast on him such a dark scowl as would have shrivelled up any but the thickest skin; he stood it well, and I think that he was "not all there," for he was a most churlish and pestilent knave. There surely must be a special future for folk of his make.

My charioteer was of a frank and open countenance, and a pretty fellow to boot; and I soon made a compact with him to take me a great jaunt the next day, provided it were "tempo belle." Then, although he had never been told, he informed me that as I was staying at the Albergo Schenardi he would drive me there. This he accordingly did, and great was the sensation created when we drove up; instead of being a cur whom anybody might neglect and ill treat, I was at once acknowledged to be a "milord." Two slaves bowed me in, and wanted to carry my traps; I have received the greatest attention ever since—they cannot write it in the bill, for I know the price of my room. They actually wipe the table now, before bringing on the victuals. Under other circumstance 'twere hardly wise to drive up in such style; neither is it wise—when visiting the smaller towns and country places in Italy—to boldly flaunt much jewellery, such as gold chains, rings, and scarf pins, for all these things are vanity, and tend to excite cupidity, and to run up hotel bills

and the prices of conveyances. Rather, when alone, assume the air of a poor Bohemian who hath a scarcity of this world's gear, who possesseth but a steel watch chain, whose clothes are the worse for wear, and who is not worth robbing. Such an one, I flatter myself, was I.

The next morning the pleasant-looking driver came for me at eight o'clock, and we set off for a long day's drive with his one small horse. Viterbo stands twelve hundred feet above the sea, and as soon as we had reached the gate at the upper end of the town we took the road leading up the hills, and as we ascended slowly for two hours, we must have attained a great height. Below were the wide plains; and the mountains with their snowy peaks stretched away into the far distance. The whole country that we passed through was volcanic; lava blocks were broken to mend the roads with, and scoria, lapili, and tufa abounded. We had long since lost sight of Viterbo, and had looked down on its towers as they lay like a map below; we had passed the great monastery, now used as a prison, and had entered forests of fine chesnut trees, many of whose trunks were rent with age. Then came many miles of desolate hills, where grew nothing but broom, and where ne'er a house was to be seen; hawks flew overhead, and had the hunting ground to themselves. A glimpse of Lake Bolsena, far behind and beyond

Viterbo, and we reached the summit of the ridge, and began to descend. There lay the plain, with beautiful Soracte towering alone from the wide surface, its base bathed in pearly haze.

We were bound for Caprarola, where is a famous palace. And now we met the country folk, the women riding astride on donkeys! What would I not have given for the chance of photographing one of them, for they were creatures utterly unconventional in appearance; they had no stirrups, their legs were encased in long white stockings and swung about like inverted dumb-bells. These fair ones were soon but a remembrance. At the foot of a steep lane, cut through tufa, a grand scene burst upon the astonished gaze! The golden plain spread far below, and up the steep hill from a deep ravine, climbed a brown red-roofed town, like a gigantic pyramid, and to the left stood the massive 16th century palace of the Farnesse family. We passed it, and rolled down the precipitous street of Caprarola to a fourth rate tavern, the best in the town, where we put up, and off I wandered, to return in an hour or so, to lunch. I walked up the great desolate flights of steps, and hammered at the door of the gloomy palazzo, which in due time a boy opened, and ushered me into a great frescoed hall. He took my passport to an office, and returned with "*non permesso.*" (How those words do rile me.) I sent him again, "at least

let me photo. in the gardens ;" he returned saying that I might do so if I would wait for him as "compagnia." I waited, and, while so doing, nearly succeeded in taking the great circular court in the centre of the building, with its double row of arcades, but an official happened to pass through, and I abandoned my nefarious design. Fifteen minutes I waited, and as that boy returned not, I opened the door and walked off in high dudgeon. There was a grand spiral staircase—but no matter. I left the family of the ex-King of Naples to enjoy their seclusion, and having pictured the town and surroundings of the palace, I walked down to the fourth-rate locanda, where, in the huge room upstairs, I sat down at the festive board with Lallo Grani, the driver.

CHAPTER IV.

LAGO BOLSENA.

"Go to the town and buy us flesh and wine,
And we will make as merry as we may ;
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are great."

Enid.

We were seated in the large room of the poor inn at Caprarola, waiting our mid-day meal. The padrone placed a loaf of coarse bread, and a dish with slices of raw ham, on the table ; these, with a bottle of wine to wash them down I was hungry, so was Lallo. I passed the dish on to him—I had seen many black hams feeding, and I could wait. The Jehu fell on it with gusto ; he filled my glass with wine, having first rinsed it with a drop which he spilled on the floor, as is the custom, and we clinked and drank. The coarse bread wanted something to give it a spice, and seeing a dish of hot macaroni I asked for some and set to work ; and then a cat came, whose education I perverted by feeding it with macaroni from my plate, and neither the padrone, or his wife, or his pretty, fair, Saxon-looking daughter had any of them a word to say in reproof thereof, for they were people of sense, and recognized the cat as a member of the one great family ; and as

the padrone had loaded up my plate until it was too many for me, and as I could not cope with the whole of it, I put the remainder aside, and set to work on some cheese (*formaggio*). The great hulk of a padrone took my plate of macaroni and returned the remnant to the common pot, and the wife and the pretty daughter ate and were filled ; the refined and proper way of doing which is to take it on a fork after the manner of hay into a hay loft, and to draw it in by suction until you can draw no more !

When our repast was finished Lallo placed his head on his hand and closed his eyes, asking me in that manner if I would sleep ! I replied that neither would I sleep nor allow slumber to my eye-lids, till I got me back to Viterbo ; and with that he said that his horse must have half-an-hour longer, so we paid a just reckoning to the padrone and waited. Now it was pre-arranged that we were to go on to Sutri, a most interesting old town, where were a large Roman amphitheatre and walls, and as soon as we were out of Caprarola, and on the road, Lallo again laid his head on his hand, and asked me whether I would sleep at Sutri or at Ronciglione, and I replied that I would do neither. He then said that it was necessary that we should sleep at one of these towns as we were on a *two* days' journey ! So we had "*molto disputa*," I arguing that he had himself planned the day's work

for twelve and a half lira, that I wished to see all and to reach Sutri, but that I would not on any account make two days of it. He drove on and became thoughtful, but was still pleasant; he was a good man to his beast, and, I think that he had found that the distance would be too great. I left it to him, saying that I much wished to see Sutri, but *must* return to Viterbo to-day. We came to Ronciglione, a town rising from a ravine, and with towers, piazza, and a fountain. "Would I sleep there?" No, I *would not*. On again, and in the course of a mile, when I began to wonder if we should get back before night, our course was unmistakably arranged, but to the loss of Sutri; we reached a bridge crossing a ravine, where repairs were going on and the road barricaded. We had received no notice of it, but could not proceed further, and so to Lallo's intense satisfaction and mutually restored good humour, we returned on our long journey to Viterbo. Lallo suggested a drop of wine by the wayside, and smoked like a chimney, but, as his pipe gave forth no smell, I concluded that it must be stuffed with hay. I happened to have a little tobacco in my pocket, and he was a happy man when he got it. It was "molto bene." We passed along the hillsides above the pretty little Lago di Vico, where sheep were feeding on the sunny slopes; then over the barren hill-tops and down through the chesnut

woods to the many-towered Viterbo, glittering in the rays of the setting sun.

The next morning I must see Monte Fiascone, a hill-top town, lying some ten miles north of Viterbo. Accordingly I took a place in the nine a.m. train, and a ramshackle carriage met that train at the station, and slowly crawled up the three miles to the town gate, where stands an unpretending inn just outside, and at a height of 2,000 feet above the sea. The only other passenger in the ramshackle was a professor of languages, and we conversed on many subjects as we drove up the hill. I gathered that he had come from Viterbo, for the day, to teach. We naturally began upon the weather ; it was "tempo brutto," but it might mend. He made many enquiries about England ; the Italians, he said, were lazy and poor ; if a man had half a lira, he did not see any necessity to work, but sat down to eat and drink, or lay basking in the sunshine. The country folk, just the same, stopped working directly they had a few pence. The Government, much to blame, kept the people poor by heavy taxation. Tobacco and salt are State monopolies and are very dear ; the tobacco, he said, was bad ; he had the usual penny cigars with him, but they were scarcely fit to smoke. I happened to have a little tobacco in my pocket, and how his eyes did glitter when he saw it. He was a nice, cheerful little man,

but says he is very poorly paid. What languages he professes I know not, but my English—*cat* and *dog* were new to him. Monte Fiascone means *Mount of the Bottle*, and the professor pointed out that the fine dome of the cathedral resembles the huge bottles in which the famous wine of the district is kept. At the Aquilla Nera (the inn outside the gate), he left me—to enter the city to teach, and I went to work also, for the rain was not heavy. Hare mentions a remarkable church outside the gate; and it I found. After taking a few pictures of streets and market-place, while waiting for the custodian to unlock the church, a pretty young girl came by with a tall red water pot on her head, whom I constrained to stand for her photo.; but she put on so grave a face that I had to make grimaces and laugh at her! then I saw a fine set of teeth, and a broad grin which was worth perpetuating, and Rebecca went away happy.

This old eleventh century church is unique. Two rows of pillars support the vaulted roof, and the capitals are carved in Byzantine manner; all are good, and differ one from another. In the centre of the church, a great square opening admits light from an upper church, which has side windows; it is reached by a long stone flight of steps. The exterior is also peculiar, for a narrow balcony runs along the top over the doors, and this is protected by a steep roof supported by short pillars.

It was now lunch time, and I entered the homely large room of the Aquilla Nera, where cookery was proceeding. What had the good woman got? No coffee, of course, or milk, but good cheese, bread and butter, and what wine! the Monte Fiascone, *bianco*, and quite cold; delicious, light, cheap, and plentiful. I speedily set to, and a nice grey cat came and sat on the next chair; then came another, and lastly a young dog. The family of the inn, meanwhile, sat down to a huge dish of macaroni, cooked by the mother, served by the daughter, and fallen upon with gusto by four fine sons. I saw that my only chance was to strike in at once; I caught the eye of the daughter, and claimed my share, and very good it was. The two grey cats on the chair next me put in their claims also, by touching me gently on the arm; I attended to their wants, and a warm brown snout under the table, put up wistfully; while we all regaled, in came the professor for his lunch, and sat down on the other side of me. He wished to know the English for the grey creatures, so I told him—cats! and the brown animal?—dog.

Just then the sun came out, and the professor recommended me to drive to Bolsena, an old town seven miles away on the border of the great crater lake of that name, which measures twenty-seven miles round; so a talk ensued, the mother, daughter, and four sons all joining in. The eldest son, a fine handsome fellow (there were

six in all, but two were not in), would drive me there and back for seven lira. Would the professor give me the pleasure of his company? The professor would like nothing better, but had to teach more language after lunch. A horse was soon brought out from the large stable and harnessed, and the bells jingled merrily down the hills, the eldest son driving, and a brigand who wanted to be franked to Bolsena, sitting alongside him; and franked he was. The way lay among hills and oaks, with cultivated patches, where never a plough is seen, but where the men and women laboriously work in rows, turning up the soil with spades; and anon we sighted the great sheet of water, and sped along under the high banks of the crater, till we came to a most interesting tract of basalt where the columns measured in width from six inches to two feet, most of them pointing towards the lake, and some of them hanging loosely, ready to be pulled out and carried away on the shoulder, if you should so wish to have a pillar ready made to place a bust on. Soon a city came in sight, which climbed the steep side of the lake, and a great ruined castle crowned the whole; Bolsena, the old Etruscan Volsinii, the birthplace of Sejanus. It was conquered by the Romans, and despoiled of two thousand statues.

Before reaching the city gate we came to a fine, large church: the door being shut, a small boy

ran for the custodian, who speedily opened it, and I photographed an altar, the work of Luca della Robbia, whereon were carved figures and cherub heads with wings wrought in his peculiar white pottery. The custodian jabbered much and was annoying, and got a dirty little candle, greasing his hands over, and insisted on lighting feebly an old tomb in a dark vault, wherein reposed the remains of St. Christina. Would I photo. it? No, I neither could nor would! In the sacristy were small paintings by Giotto, under glass. Would I photo.? No, I neither could nor would! The custodian grew more waxy—no, I mean tallowy—and imagined that I thought that they were not by Giotto. I told him I had no doubt they were by Giotto, but how could I tell by the light of a feeble dip? And I gat me out into the daylight, where the sun shone, and I handed the honest man threepence, which he looked at and then turned away, and which a dirty companion looked at, and also turned away; and the custodian talked, and I comprehended him not, for it is only good Italian that I can comprehend.

So I walked away, and, while the horse rested and ate, I climbed and stormed the city, and the inhabitants had evidently witnessed no such exciting event since the Romans did the same. Gateways, old houses, castle, and lake were all taken, and I came where, under a high cliff, stood

two patient oxen harnessed to a cart which men were filling with tufa ; and while I looked upon the team, all the folk round about besieged that cart. There were customs officers, workmen, passers-by, and children, and the workmen stayed their work and ruminated ; and seeing that the piled up cart now made a heterogeneous and harmonious picture, I espied a laden donkey tied to a post, and him I loosed and led in among the other asses, and no one asked me what I did loosing the ass, but assisted and laughed in chorus. And when the picture was taken, I left the ass to tie himself up again, and, as a reward to the crowd, I let each who liked look at the oxen and the now empty cart through my sight glass, and they all marvelled greatly, so much so that I walked off down the hill ; and that story will be told around many a fire-side, when the children who saw the show are grandfathers.

I returned to our carriage. The horse was still feeding, and, hard by, stood that custodian of the great church with his evil looking companion, who opened on me about some grievance or other, and seeing that the custo. had something on his mind, I pitied him, and to help him lift it off, I offered him again the three-pence which he had refused, and, from his tone of voice, I fancied that he grew sarcastic, and he said, he supposed I comprehended him not ; and I said such was, indeed, the case, for that I came from distant

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Inghilterra where Italian is but little spoken or understood ; and still he refused the largess. So I leaned up against a house to think, and he leaned up against another house to talk ; and some looked askance at him and others at me ; then I whistled, but apparently the Italians cannot whistle, so that we were not even on common ground there ! and I wished for the professor of languages, for the *custo*. began to utter words which I knew not, and I told him again that I was a poor Inglese, that he had the advantage of me, and that I comprehended him not. And looking around, I beheld that the horse had done eating and was being harnessed. I climbed into the chariot and wished him adieu, to which he shouted a long farewell ; and it has since been impressed upon my heart, that the sun may have gone down upon his wrath, for I think that he had something yet upon his mind, and that he was not altogether pleased ; but I comprehended him not, and I cannot for certain depose.

We turned homewards ; the nice young driver questioned me of England, of Liverpool, and of the great ocean steamers ; of the rate the trains ran from Liverpool to London, and of New York and America. I told him the trains went after the manner of an arrow from the bow of the archer, or as a swallow in its flight ; that as to America, I could tell him nought, for that since Columbus had discovered it, I had not been there ;

I, in my turn, questioned him of the lake and of the two beautiful islands, of the people, and of the snakes ; as to whether his father was yet alive, and how he liked his penny cigars ; and having a bit of tobacco in my pocket, I bade him put it in his pipe and smoke it and to give me his opinion as to its quality ; and he replied to all of these, that the lake was a great crater lake of untold depth, and that there were great fish within its waters ; that one island was a block of lava, that the other was forty minutes' sail from the further shore, was extremely beautiful and that eighteen persons lived on it. That as for snakes, he saw them sometimes and liked them not ; that if he had a gun at the time (and he raised his arm as though to fire) "pomb !" and the snake lay dead. That the old man, his father, is yet alive and would be home from Civita Vecchia in a day or two ; that he liked not the penny cigars (which they grew in the country), that my tobacco was "*molto bene*," and that sometimes he got hold of good tobacco "*contrebanda*." I suggested that possibly the old man might meet with some such at Civita Vecchia, upon which he emphatically and seriously shook his head. On the question of brigands : none just about here, but some not very far away. Then he lifted up his voice and sang, and plucked strange flowers for me from the wayside as he walked up the hills, and the country girls, when they

passed, turned and looked after him, for he was a handsome, comely youth. So the two hours' journey pleasantly passed, and at Mount Fiascone, I climbed the hill under the castle to behold the great crater lake spread out under me, and to look far over the plain to the mountains, down a winding road, past sunlit buildings and great stone pines, and, as the sunset gilded all, to watch the contadinas in their gay colours and with loaded donkeys, coming slowly up to the city gate where I stood. As darkness came on, I said "Good-bye" to the family at the Aquilla Nera, joined the professor, and rolled rapidly down the hill to catch the train to Viterbo.

CHAPTER V.

THE MONKS OF MONTE SORACTE.

“Farewell to Lochaber—Lochaber no more !”

I have left Viterbo with its many fountains, its beautiful women and its handsome men, and sore am I at the thought of it. Three days of bliss, and all gone ! One and eightpence per night, and pay as you go ! This morning I imposed an English sovereign on the old man at the café ; he looked at it long, and then handed it round among all the assembled town's folk, who come in to eat, drink and talk. Many were the furtive glances cast at the stranger who had palmed off the coin. The opinion of a priest being favourable to its acceptance for twenty-five lira, St. George and his dragon won the day. Farewell to the old man, between whom and myself quite an affectionate understanding had sprung up ; the other day I asked him for honey, and he sent out for two pennyworth. This morning he divined that I was off, and he brought on the remainder of that chemist's decoction ; but I forgive him, and wish him nothing worse than that he may eat the remainder himself. Farewell to the

gilded youth of Viterbo, who go about wrapped in the Roman toga, and with brigand hat ; to the small boys, one of whom had continually to cover his mouth with his hand, to keep down his uproarious mirth when I tried to talk with him. Farewell to the one town where I have not seen a beggar. Farewell to the wild, melancholy songs of Viterbo. I listened to a man singing, one hot, sunny morning, as he sawed branches up in an olive tree ; there was a peculiar, fascinating ring about it that is most difficult to describe. To obtain a faint glimmering of it, sing with a nasal twang, descend four notes in a minor key, then four more, beginning on the third, and yet another four after the same manner, but ending with a twiddlum and a prolonged howl, as of a cat in distress. The above is a simple sample of the Etruscan songs. It sounds not well in a cold-blooded description, but the style admits of endless variety, and a little practice out in the fields, away from your friends, can hurt no one. It may, for a time, frighten the birds, but, in the end, it will please many a drawing-room company. At all events, it was delightful to be woke in the night, as I was many times by companies of boys singing ; a tenor would lead the wild dirge, and others, the accompanying parts, coming so near the sound of musical instruments as to create some of the loveliest harmony I have ever listened to. Ordinary boys were

the musicians ; they sang the delicious melody with a refinement such as we seldom hear from the boys in our country. It was so different from the monotony of "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay," which I had left behind me in London, and which I apologise for mentioning here.

So I left Viterbo and came once more to the junction on the main line. Up came the train for Rome, I opened the door of one compartment, and, finding it full, I tried the next, and there sat the only Englishman I had seen for many days, my friend the "scientist," whom I was to meet in Rome. We had but a quarter of an hour together, for I must leave the train at Orte, the next station ; I could not persuade him to join me, for he wished to see much of Rome ; so agreeing to meet in the course of a few days, either in Rome or Naples, I saw the train leave the platform at Orte, and wandered along the green banks of the Tiber to a bend in the river which composed pictorially with the old city on its hill. I was bound for Narni, a city reached by a branch line passing through a rugged limestone gorge where the foamy, rapid Nar flows through much grand forest scenery.

As we near the city, the stupendous ruin of the Bridge of Augustus comes into view. A fallen mass stands in mid-stream, for many centuries have not sufficed to wash it away, and plants now beautify its ancient stones. Near it, spanning the river, is a

mediæval bridge, whereon a tower stands sentinel, and Narni, approached by frowning gateways surmounts the crags on the other side the torrent.

Glorious Narni on her crag,
Where the wall-flower waves like a yellow flag
Over the walls of Narni.
Strains from voices rich and rare,
Borne of zephyrs through the air
Over the walls of Narni.

Songs of Etruria.

Truly each town in this favoured land seems to outshine its fellow, and Narni is no exception. There are winding ways up to the gates ; walls and ruins where creepers run wild, and flowers bloom ; a cathedral and fountain, flights of steps, gloomy old arches, delicately carved Papal escutcheons—and, wherever you come to the outer walls, you have a wide view, down the craggy limestone gorge, with its foaming river, or over the far, deep, quiet valley stretching away to Terni with its distant Apennines and far-away Alps.

The old cathedral faces a great piazza, and a many-arched loggia runs along its front. I stood here for awhile, watching the gathering gloom, and presently the rain fell in torrents, so I opened the door of the church and sat down to rest. All was quiet as the grave, save for the gentle patter of the rain upon the roof high over head ; the gloom deepened, but a soft mellow light from the stained windows fell on pillar, statue and floor, imparting a weird grandeur to the

place. While I sat there musing, suddenly I heard sounds of sweetest music rise and fall and rise again; voices sang a full choral; one voice of surpassing loveliness soaring upward with an exuberance of joy which thrilled through my every nerve; I groped in the darkness to find the singer; again and again the glorious anthem swelled, and again that superb voice carried it on upward and beyond the rest, and, again my search was in vain. The voices came from I knew not where—

“O never harp nor horn,
Nor aught we blow with breath or touch with hand,
Was like that music as it came.”

The weakness of the mortal asserted itself, and soul-hunger battled with bodily fatigue; like the Wandering Jew I could find no rest; I gathered up my burden and left the ghostly place, and meeting outside with a man of Narni, I enquired of him for the nearest café, and behold it was hard by, and I turned in.

I stood at the window looking out over the great precipices descending to the valley of the rushing Nar, and presently the rain abating, I left the hospitable café and passed down through the old gateways and narrow streets. Numbers of peasants were ascending to the town, having the appearance from above of so many animated mushrooms of brilliant hue, for each

one carried a bright red or green umbrella. The Italians are terribly frightened of a drop of rain; I carried my umbrella under my arm to keep it dry.

Narni was speedily left behind, and from the junction at Orte I again caught the train for Rome, leaving it at the station of Borghetto, where, in the darkness, an old castle loomed up in a ghostly manner against the starlit sky. Here I took a small carriage and journeyed up the country to Civita Castellana. We mounted a long hill from Borghetto, and travelled over a wide, level plain where human habitations were scarce. A long black object resembling a whale's back was visible as we bowled along. The driver pointed at it, saying, "Monte Soracte, Signor." One of my objects in coming to Civita Castellana was to visit Monte Soracte, and I arranged with the driver to take me there the next day by carriage and pair for twelve and a half lira. An hour after leaving Borghetto we came to one of the deep ravines which surround Civita Castellana on all sides: this we crossed by a three-arched bridge, 120 feet in height, and drove up to the Albergo Croce Bianca, the first sight of which was scarcely inviting. I entered by the kitchen, where the padrone and several guests were seated at a meal. I expected to have to join them, but, after being shown my large bed-room, with its brick floor, I was conducted to a comfortable *salla grande*, upstairs. On the whole, I

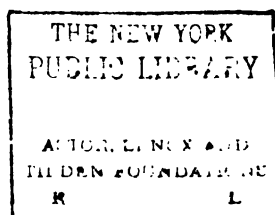
can recommend the hotel, but bargaining is advisable when dealing with a native of this city. At eight the next morning the jingle of bells announced that my man had come, and presently he walked into the *salle* to claim his victim, and off we drove for St. Oreste, a village situated on a spur of Monte Soracte.

The views of the mountain as seen when approaching are varied and beautiful ; now it looks like a pyramid, and on coming nearer, the long ridge, with its many peaks, comes into sight. It has been likened to the Rock of Gibraltar, which it resembles in size, both mountains measuring more than three miles in length, and upwards of 2,000 feet in height. Geologically, it is a mass of limestone which apparently has been upheaved through the volcanic rocks of the plain surrounding its base for many miles. About forty years ago the dense forests which clothed the sides of the mountain, harbouring wolves, bears, and robbers, were cut down, since which time all these creatures have gradually disappeared. Cato says that there were wild goats who could leap sixty feet at one bound ! If such were the case—and Cato was an honourable man—they have sadly deteriorated at the present day. No doubt there was more necessity for wild leaping in the days when wolves were on their track.

There are several monasteries on Soracte ; most of them are now uninhabited, but hospitable monks still

dwell in Saint Maria della Grazie. Having left the carriage at St. Oreste, I proceeded alone up the mountain, the views growing grander and wilder as I walked on—the distant mountains, the wide plain where the Tiber wound its course like a great snake, the floating clouds and the mists, formed a constantly changing panorama. And now the top was obscured, and I feared that I might never reach it, but on entering a grove of splendid ilex trees, the mists cleared, and I saw the monastery right above on the ridge. Then came the mellow tones of the bell, echoed faintly, as it were, by the cow bells far away on the plain below, and I thought of the good brethren of the monastery, fasting and praying, and wondered if a carnally-minded man of earth would do well to disturb them, worn, spiritualised, emaciated by long watching and waiting ! And still the bell rang on, and I passed the gate and ascended yet further to the disused monastery of St. Silvestro on the topmost peak ; as I neared it, mists again crept up, half covering the great precipices on the further side of the mountain, and the effects were grand !

The last monks who lived here left the monastery in 1700, because seven of the community perished in a storm by lightning. Having sat awhile, I crept down to the gate of the first monastery. The church being closed, I opened a large door, and found myself in a







garden, where, at a short distance, stood one—not as I had imagined him, reduced by prayer and fasting, but as described by my driver as “*frate grosso*,” a rubicund, jolly, corpulent old friar, the picture of calm content, as he stood there in the warm sunshine, clothed in the cream-coloured gown of the Franciscans, with a scarlet cross on his breast. “Was I intruding?” “Not at all.” “Would the padre sit for his portrait?” “Of course he would, and only too glad.” That being done, I sat with him among his flowers, and we questioned each other of home and kin, and discoursed on matters mostly carnal and appertaining to this life; and coming to the well—for there is one at the top of this mountain—Padre Thomaso proposed to stand there also for his likeness, and then he beamed with all the benevolence and good humour which his face betokened. Feeling thirsty, I wanted to lower the copper bucket for water, but this did not accord with the padre’s idea of hospitality; I must come into the refectory, where, while he sat by me, joking and telling me many particulars about the monastery and his life, I drank the white wine and ate the coarse bread and cheese of the community.

Did the padre smoke a pipe? The padre was very fond of it, and thereupon refilled my glass. Happening to have a little tobacco in my pocket, I pulled it out, and the padre, with glistening eyes, scented the fragrant

weed, saying that it was "*molto bene*," and much better than any he could get in Italy, though when he lived in Spain, at Cordova, he had good tobacco, and with that he helped himself to a sample of mine, and then endeavoured to refill my glass. But there is a limit, and I had to cover the glass with my hand, telling him that in England I never took wine. "No?" he said. "Beer?" "Wrong again—water," I said, and that if I were to let him fill my glass I should go falling down the mountain instead of walking, and with that, his good old sides shook so, that he had to hold them. Then, four cats appearing, the padre said that they were well off in that particular. Having looked into the kitchen, with its huge fireplace, and left the cook (one of the frate, also in a cream robe), to some very slight extent richer than I found him, I asked how many there were in the community, and the padre said six. Then, taking me along a passage where were many cell doors, he knocked at one of them, and out came the Superior, and the two walked along the passage. The padre motioned me to stay where I was, and I, knowing that this was the sign that I was to follow them, did so; and such was indeed the case, for the Superior—an intellectual-looking father—opened the door of a room and showed me many meteorological instruments belonging to the Alpine Club, who have the room as a station. There was a portrait on the

wall, of some one of whom the padre seemed to think highly, but of whom I thought nothing, nor can I say that I should think any good of him were I to meet him in the flesh ; for whether it were the artist's fault or no I cannot say, but the man wore a small chin and a huge forehead, and resembled, in cast of countenance, an idiot. Having looked round the monastery and the church, I said "Good-bye" to the hospitable monks, and set off down the mountain path, through the ilex grove, enjoying to the full the grand views of mountains and plain. Soon the town of S. Oreste came into sight, and climbing up to the gate I found my chariot, and while the horses were harnessing, the population—having nothing to do and plenty of time to do it in—stood around, silently gazing, and I have the Mayor, Corporation and townsfolk in a group, wherewith to prove the truth of my story.

Down through the thick olive groves we drove swiftly ; the sun shone and all went well. Splendid was the colouring and grand the effect as we came to the great ravines surrounding Civita Castellana. Down on the stream in the bottom, an old Roman bridge stopped short after the first arch, and another has since its time been built ; looking down the different branches of the ravines, the brown lava precipices contrasted well with the green grass and shrubs. The town has but little to show in the way of architecture,

but the cathedral is a fine old specimen, with its long wide portico and great central arch. The beautiful mosaic work yet delights the eye, though it has braved the weather of more than six centuries, being the work of Lorenzo Cosmati and his sons, about the year 1210.

The chief charm of Civita Castellana lies in the ravines with their red and yellow cliffs, wooded dells and foaming streams. I found the picturesque narrow track which winds down the cliff to the foot of the high bridge; parts of it are cut through the rock, and ferns and creepers grow in profusion. There are a few old mills on the stream, and many donkeys pass up and down carrying grain and flour.

Parts of the town are walled round, and though the road-way thereon is kept in the dirtiest state imaginable, still the views are so fine as to make amends for the disagreeables. The old citadel stands on the side of a deep ravine and from the gateway close by the road leads through three or four miles of country to the ruins of the city of Falleri. As I wished to drive there the landlord sent for a *vetturino*; he was a young fellow of unpleasant face and manner. When asked the price for the return journey he said "ten lira," and on my laughing at him and bidding him be gone, he immediately came down to five. We set off at once, passing over bridges, spanning ravines whose rocky sides were honeycombed by ancient Etruscan tombs.

The boy knew not the route, and although the towers of Falleri were right ahead he often enquired his way, and at last attempted to drive over a ploughed field ; I thereupon left the vehicle and struck across the undulating wooded country, leaving the genius to find the way among the ruins. Falleri was a Roman town of the third century. Before one of its nine ancient entrances a large Roman tomb towers up ; the old walls with the remains of fifty towers measure nearly a mile and a half round ; there they stand, ivy covered and moss grown ; trees surmount the battlements, and flowers bloom from the crevices ; the owls build among the stones, and the noiseless bat makes his home in the dark towers. One side of the town looks over a ravine where are many Etruscan tombs in the red rocks.

On the far side from Civita Castellana there is the only perfect gateway, the Porta Giove, and the roadway within leads to the only buildings which are now left of the once populous city. The ruined convent of Santa Maria di Falleri, with its church, stands amid cultivated ground. Dennis says that the convent was constructed from the materials of the ruined city, and is apparently of the twelfth century. The roof of the church has fallen in, and the convent is used by a farmer as house, barns, and cattle sheds. There is a court-yard with a good well-head ; the place is

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exceedingly picturesque and remains of pillars and marble capitals lie about, speaking of the convent's better days.

The knave had found his way into the silent city by the time I had walked round it. I could unfold more facts which would not redound to the credit of that wily Italian, but I forbear. If he hath a conscience, let him look to it ; he knows that I dragged him up by the arm before the station master at Borghetto for cheating. Enough that I never wish to look upon his face again.

Down in a gloomy deep ravine,
Where the gurgling waters rippled and sang,
A moss-grown mill may still be seen,
Under tawny cliffs where the creepers hang.

A narrow, twisty, tortuous road
Descends the rocks to the crumbling mill ;
Fern-grown and peopled by lizard and toad,
And damp, dank verdure runs wild at will.

Sombre the arch which spans the dell,
Two lovers leapt from its dizzy height !
'Tis said that the clang of a muffled bell,
O'er the crumbling mill is heard at night !

Songs of Etruria.

With the above affecting legend we take our leave of Civita Castellana, and push forward to Rome and Naples, in search of the scientist who, it must be remembered, had preceded me by a few days.

CHAPTER VI.

WITH THE SCIENTIST IN NAPLES.

"The leaves scarce rustled in the sighing breeze ;
In azure dimples curled the sparkling seas,
And, as the golden tide of light they quaff'd,
Campania's sunny meads and vineyards laugh'd,
White gleam'd each lichen'd oak and giant pine,
On the far sides of swarthy Apennine."

MACAULAY.

I passed down the banks of old "Father Tiber," and in a few hours was in Rome, where I made enquiries for the scientist and learned that he had left for Naples the previous night. I went to a café and sat down to review the situation. There were three courses open. I might stay where I was and be miserable; but I hankered after the society of the scientist, and had reason to believe that he had letters for me. I might put the police on his track to bring him back to Rome, or I might follow him to Naples. I chose the latter; and here let me impart a wrinkle. I left Rome by the early train the next morning (the accelerated express, a train which moves about as quickly as our parliamentary—but that is nought). Thomas Cook and Son's office not being open so early, I had to take my ticket at the

station. "Could I have a return ticket?" Certainly, but I must return the same day, which was absurd. So I paid 22½ lira, and the same sum for the return journey. Now, Cook has an arrangement whereby if you have his tickets as far as Rome (which I had) he can book you a return, allowing a few days in Naples, for the sum of 29 lira. Therefore the rascally Italian had me to the extent of 16 lira.

It is a grand ride of from five to ten hours—according to the "accelerating" of the train—to Naples. You steam out over the Campagna with its lines of ruined Roman aqueducts; then you pass the Albanian hills with their lakes and towns (of which more anon). Velletri follows, with far off glimpses of the Volscian mountains, where nestle Cori and Ninfa (of which more anon), and after passing many hilltop towns and smiling plains, we see high up on a mountain the great monastery of Monte Cassino (of which more anon). In due time that inveterate smoker, Vesuvius, comes in sight, and we rush into the heart of crowded, hot, sunny Naples.

In the afternoon I walked up and down and through the great city, enjoying the many well-known scenes. From the castle of St. Elmo I gazed over the whole of Naples and the wide panorama of its great bay; I passed through crowded streets gay with fruit and flower sellers, along the Santa Lucia where lazzaroni bask in the sunshine, where the children play about,

avoiding the horses' feet as by a miracle ; where the familiar omnibus cart, drawn by one poor nag and loaded with sixteen passengers clinging all over it like a swarm of bees, rushes along towards Torre del Greco, at a speed almost equalling the accelerated express ; past the busy shipping, and on to where under the porch of the San Carlo theatre the letter writers still sit, to scribble off the love letters for the poor creatures who have much to say, but cannot themselves put it on to paper. It is interesting to watch the folk who patronise these tables. A soldier comes up to send a message to the girl he left behind him in a far distant city ; a maid servant wants to send a note to her special policeman, and so indites a few words to the old fellow who sits under the archway. Now pass through some of the narrow slums down near the water ; the houses are high and there are grand effects of light and shade ; whole families sit gossiping round the door ways ; hucksters pass up and down crying their wares : there are lemonade stalls and fruit in abundance, and the whole street is a mass of gaily coloured, seething humanity, such as you seldom see in any other city. Further on a cow is being milked straight into a glass tumbler ! watch the process ; when filled, you will see the glass placed in a basket hanging by a cord, and up it goes quickly to a fifth storey high overhead ; the cow meanwhile has moved slowly on, as it probably knows

the next house of call. There is a certainty about the quality and freshness of the milk when obtained on this system, whereas in England we have to depend on boys who bring it round in tin cans, we know not how far, or from whence the source, or from what pump they replenish the deficiencies. Push on through this dense neighbourhood, and come out at the public gardens bordering on the bay ; and as the sun goes down you will have a good opportunity of observing the aristocracy of Naples, for there they are, driving up and down in carriages innumerable.

BELLA NAPOLI.

Balmy days,	Goats in flocks,
Golden haze.	Hens and cocks.
Moonlight night,	Horses, asses,
Supreme delight.	Carts with masses.
Mandoline,	Beggars plenty,
Sunny e'en.	Give them "nienti,"
Stalls of lemons,	Come the more,
Oranges, melons.	By the score,
Crowds a yelling,	Laughing, weeping,
Buying, selling.	Waking, sleeping.
Folk a tearing,	Sky of blue
Cursing, swearing.	Cerulean hue.
Bells a jingling,	Good wine,
Voices mingling.	White, fine !
Masses surging,	Water best !
Drivers scourging.	Drink with zest.
Crowded busses,	Tobacco bad !
Women, hussies.	Good can't be had ;
Monks and friars,	Folk in rags,
Tanners, dyers.	Ugly hags.
Letter writers,	Crowded slums,
Cigar lighters.	Dirty chums.
Donkeys, mules,	Hearts light,
Boys from schools.	Eyes bright.

Poor but gay,	Life of glee,
Little pay.	Let sorrow flee.
Chiaja drive	Palm trees wave,
All alive !	Blue waters lave.
Swells are out	Cook Vesuve,
All about !	Ex'lent move.
Shops delightful,	Up to crater,
Nothing frightful !	No treat greater.
Electric light	Lava bed,
Shines at night.	Hot and red !
The sweet guitar	A light snatch
Anear ! afar !	(Save a match),
Laughter, song	Cross the bay
Whole night long.	Sunny day,
Cupid darts	Money flies !
At many hearts.	Say good-byes.
Beams above,	Happy people ye,
Light of love.	Bella Napoli.
Peaceful time,	
Sunny clime,	

I climbed by streets and stairs up to the Corso, a fine modern way, constructed along the side of the great crater in which Naples is built, and there, standing in the doorway of the "hotel Britanique," I found the Scientist. He gave forth home news and letters, for I had heard nothing in the far away wilds of Etruria ; he also reported a grand day's work among the ruins of Pompeii where he had bagged game to the extent of thirty Kodak views. He now felt a quietude of mind known only to active, industrious souls ; and with the calumet of peace, all ended in smoke.

Darkness came on, and with it a glorious moonlight night ; a sonata in silver ! none of your plated goods, but the genuine article ; moreover it was accompanied

by mandolines and guitars, and was thoroughly Neapolitan.

As we sat in our balcony high up, over-looking the bay, we gazed on a most perfect bit of ideal Italy. Far away lay the island of Capri, its outlines clear against the star-lit sky, its base bathed in pearly haze. A silvery strait of water divided it from the mountainous coast leading up to Sorrento, where the lights of the town doubled themselves as long spear points in the still waters below. Range after range of mountains faded away into the distance beyond Salerno, and then came the small coast towns near Pompeii, and Vesuvius sending forth great clouds of steam which mingled with the fitful red glare sent up from the heart of the mountain. There were fiery gleams also below the great cone, as though from a midnight camp of brigands ; but, in reality, a stupendous mass of lava, like a fiery serpent, is slowly rolling day and night towards Naples, and would that I were up there by night to see it. Down below, the base of the mountain faded into grey, in contrast to the countless lights of Naples, and myriads of stars threw their lights from the clear heaven above.

“ The sifted silver of the night
Rained down a strange delight.”

The scientist had been to the marine station and aquarium, situated in the public gardens of Naples. I

believe that he and the curator had rubbed noses together ; at any rate they had had much enjoyment in each other's society for though they had never before met they had long known of each other by the hearing of the ear ; and I believe that the curator had called some horrid beast after the scientist. I am not in it myself, and therefore I speak as a fool ; but it does savour of drivelling idiocy when intellectual scientific men get wildly excited and nearly lose their mental balance, if one of them finds in his tow net a beast, half the size of nothing, which has a tail, say eight-tenths in size—shorter than another beast about its own fighting weight. I know not if I have made myself clear, for I lack the scientific method of expression.

We planned that night—the scientist and I—that we would ascend Vesuvius on the morrow, and at 8.30 a.m. we stood at the door of Cook's office and awaited the carriages, resolving to have the box seat of the first one : so had a tall Englishman hard by, for no sooner had the horses come up than he threw his umbrella on to the dicky, and was thus master of the situation. We could not help remarking to each other " how selfish some people are."

The usual number of beggars pestered us as we rode through the crowded suburbs of Naples. There was the man, whose legs being failures, was ridden about

on an ass ; the man with shrivelled arms ; the weeping man who was dying there and then of starvation ; the amiable looking man of aristocratic bearing who bowed graciously as the carriage passed ! and many more. Then, as we came to the slopes of Vesuvius, there was the usual band of mandolinists and singers, who discoursed sweet music until all the available coppers had been thrown, when they lagged behind to wait for the other carriages. Next we reached a musician of so novel a character that I wished him every success and a long life. He had but one leg and a crutch, and while his partner turned the handle of a piano, he whistled the tune out loud and strong by inserting two fingers in his mouth ; the description sounds feeble, but go and hear him, and if ye are not pleased, there must be something wanting in ye ; either your musical education has been neglected when young, or ye have not an ear atuned to sweet and tender music.

When the station of the Funicular Railway is reached, you have the privilege of paying four lira for a lunch in the restaurant, but if, having paid twenty-five lira for the day's outing, you have a mind to be economical, accept a wrinkle ! bring lunch with you, ask the waiter for a cup of coffee, and you will get the most delicious beverage, and will crow over the rest of the folk.

The crater behaved itself badly, sending forth such dense clouds of steam as to prevent visitors walking

round it, and only allowing them to look down into its great boiling cauldron from one point; but this was made up to us; for, having descended the cone, we were told that a great lava stream was slowly rolling from small craters in the valley, between the cone and Monte Somma. Thither we walked over the rough old lava beds, until the air grew hot, and we heard curious crunching noises; then the heat became intense, and we watched the hardening masses as they writhed and moved and fell over, showing a white heat within. Being still of an economical state of mind—to save matches—I leaned down and lit my pipe at the red hot lava, and we walked on and on, marvelling at this strange freak of nature, which resembled a huge pot of porridge boiling over. At dinner in the evening I advised three charming American girls to visit that lava stream, and the next night they told me that they had each lit a cigarette thereat, and I cannot blame them; but I fear that the evil habit of smoking took hold upon them, for in the stillness of the night, from our balcony I could discern three seraphic forms with arms lovingly interlaced, walking to and fro on the terrace, and one tiny red glow deepened the peach-like bloom upon their cheeks; yet, lest I should be misunderstood, I should be the last to say that it came from a cigarette.

The next day grand masses of white cloud rolled

about the summit of the mountain, flecking its wide slopes with long vistas of tender light and shadow, and we sat on the paddle box of the steamer in the hot sunshine, gazing over the bluest of seas. The scientist was bound for Capri, while I landed under the steep cliffs of Sorrento, and spent some hours up among the hills and woods, where were many peeps between the olives, over craggy heights, distant purple mountains, and white sails dotting the sea like broad winged birds. Further up I sat to rest and to eat my frugal repast, enjoying for dessert a noble panorama of wooded hill stretching away to the point where Capri, separated by a few miles of glowing sapphire, pointed her rocky crest to heaven.

“White clouds whose shadows haunt the deep ;
Light mists, whose soft embraces keep
The sunshine on the hills asleep !

O isles of calm !—O dark, still wood,
And stiller skies that overbrood
Your rest with deeper quietude !

* * * * *

Life's burdens fall, its discords cease,
I lapse into the glad release
Of nature's own exceeding peace.”

Addio Napoli ! Down came the rain in torrents as we left for the station. A cute individual at the hotel, who was killing time waiting for the weather to clear, “guessed that the quantity of steam from the crater of Vesuvius during the past few days fully accounted for

the downpour." Had he followed us to Monte Cassino and found the deluge still going on, his faith in such a theory might have received a shock.

The Albergo Pompeii at Cassino is not all that could be wished ; it must have fallen off since Mr. Hare visited it, for he speaks of it as being " one of the best country inns in Italy."

There were no women kind about, which is uncomfortable, unnatural, and a bad sign. The stone stairs were partly covered by what in the remote past might have been white stair cloth. It may have been laid down for Mr. Hare, but now its manufacturer would not know it, and the stairs themselves were covered by small stones and dust, giving them the look of having just recovered from an eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

Many visitors climb the mountain to claim the hospitality of the monastery ; it was well that we did not do so as it turned out, for being very near Easter, every available bed and cell were full.

The next morning opened with rain and mist, but about breakfast time the rain ceased, and for a few minutes the great monastery became visible as a mirage clearly cut against the sky, while the whole of the mountain was in a dense fog. We had seen the vision, and must ascend. A good carriage road winds up in long zig-zags among the woods and heather ; at times,

wild looking cattle showed dimly among the ghostly forms of ilex and olive, but gradually the mists cleared, ranges of purple mountains bounded the distant plain, and on the other side of the valley behind the town a hill, crowned by the grand old castle of Rocca-Janula, composed well as a picture, with a cypress tree shooting upward from the ancient roadway, which in past times alone led upward to the monastery on the peak.

S. Benedict founded the monastery in the 6th century; he came thither after he had been a monk for thirty-six years. From the monastery at Subiaco, a tradition says that he was led through the Apennines alternately by two angels and two ravens. He occupied a cell at Monte Cassino for twenty-three years. As a memento of those old days, two tame ravens hop about the courts, cloisters and buildings of the monastery. Angels are not obtainable. I tried to photo. these birds, but although they would let me stroke them when I left the camera—with it in my hands, they hopped away and chattered, in a highly perturbed state of mind, so I gave up the quest.

On reaching the monastery we passed through the gardens and cloistered courts, up the wide flights of steps and entered the beautiful church, a fine building, lavishly decorated with various coloured marbles and frescoes. The congregation was in harmony with it

all, for probably no church in Italy can show a more telling picture than this one at Monte-Cassino, at Easter. Groups of peasants—the women clothed in clean white bodices and head-gear, with the most brilliantly coloured scarves and dresses, the men in handsome brigandish looking costumes—were kneeling in scattered groups over the marble floor ; there were women and children worshipping devoutly ; studies they were, that would drive an artist crazy with delight. Grand mass was being celebrated, and there would probably be services going on till 2 p.m. Many of the peasants had come from distant towns and had ascended the mount in the early morning. The Abbot, not being a bishop, cannot bless the holy oil, so it had to be blessed by the right personage and sent on by express train for the Easter festival.

From the church, one of the brethren took us to the library, where we met the archivist, an intellectual good-looking American, a lay-brother ; some strangers were there, studying valuable works, but the archivist, leaving the brother in charge, very kindly showed us through as much of the monastery as might be seen, considering the Easter services. He showed us some of the earliest printed works of Italy and also many finely illuminated books. We next visited the oldest parts of the great pile ; St. Benedict's cell and a number of chapels now in course of restoration. Ten

years ago it took 140 men three months to clear out this part, and then the beautiful figure frescoes on the many walls were begun ; all the work of monks ! They surely must have had an art education. Many of the frescoes are yet only in outline, and very few are really finished, for money came to an end, and the work was stayed. It is now again in hand and proceeding. Ancient as is the foundation of the monastery, there are continual changes through partial shattering by earthquake shocks ; four were felt in one day last October, and there have been more since than during the whole of the three previous years. " This is just the weather for them, and they may come at any moment !—we get used to them !" We waited and waited, but none came, and we had to descend without the experience.

A large number of boys, including about sixty from the best families in Naples, are educated at Monte-Cassino.

The Benedictines have theoretically ceased to exist in Italy, and this grand old monastery, which has endured many centuries of chequered existence from sieges, famine and earthquake, is liable to be seized by the government at any time. So long, however, as its admirable work of education continues, the community is not likely to be disturbed. We were shown a large hall panelled round by frescoes, the

work of one man ; he had been engaged in similar work in another town, but someone having severely criticised it, he had, in a fit of rage, murdered the man and fled to this monastery. His faces are feeble and effeminate, but, as our guide said, "how could such a man feel inspired to do good work?" That arrant thief, Napoleon, stole one of the best of the *original* pictures from this hall.

With two quotations I conclude what I have to say about this famous monastery. "Times are indeed changed since the Abbot of Monte Cassino was the first baron of the kingdom of Naples, administrator of a diocese (created 1321) composed of 37 parishes ; while amongst the dependencies of the abbey were four bishoprics, two principalities, 20 countships, 250 castles, 440 towns and villages, 336 manors, 23 sea ports, 33 islands, 200 mills, 300 tracts of land, and 1662 churches."—HARE.

"And when a famine prevailed greatly throughout Campania, and the five last loaves had been eaten in the monastery, and the brethren wore very long faces, Benedict reproved them, and passing the night in prayer, the following morning two hundred measures of meal were found at the door."—LINDSAY'S "Christian Art."

"Patience ! and ye shall hear what he beheld
In other lands where he was doomed to go."

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CHAPTER VII.

ON THE VOLSCIAN MOUNTAINS.

“The sky is changed !—and such a change ! Oh, night
And storm, and darkness—ye are wondrous strong ;
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman ! ”

The gloomy salon of the Albergo Pompeii was deserted—I sat alone looking out on the gathering storm ; darkness was coming on ! The wind howled, the doors banged, reverberating through the ghostly house, and anon the thunder shook its timbers, and I began to think that now an earthquake was really about to visit Monte Cassino, and I rather repented ever having wished for one. Hail fell, and the air somewhat cooled.

A solitary lamp served but to create phantoms in every part of the room ; the violincello standing in one corner assumed the appearance of a cowering old man ! the faces from the frescoed ceiling grinned down at me, and I felt lonely, and began to think I might as well have gone with the scientist to Rome. He had left Cassino soon after we had descended from the Mount, for he wished to spend Good Friday in Rome. I, preferring to stay “far from the madding crowd,” had

concluded to pass one more night in Cassino, and then to visit the wild Volscian mountains, rejoining him in a few days. So here I was, in this unprepossessing hotel, and alone. Two English ladies were here last night, but they had left, and now nothing remained for me but to go to bed early, and wait for the morrow. The waiter entering, I asked him who played the violincello ; he said the *padrone* did, and in good style. So much the better for the *padrone* ; I felt more comfortable, for I had not liked the man. And who twanged the guitar ? The waiter himself did that ; bravo, waiter ! but we could not expect any carnal music on the eve of Good Friday, so it was of no use to ask him ; he vanished with the remains of my feast, the door banging behind him, and echoing up to the topmost garret. The rain fell in torrents outside, and the furniture within creaked, and curious noises disturbed my nerves, so I fled the apartment, and groped my way up the volcanically strewn staircase in the pitch dark, felt for the door of my room, and was soon buried in oblivion.

“The morn is up again, the dewy morn.”

I paid my reckoning, and by train arrived in about two hours at the station of Segni, about half-way between Cassino and Rome. A couple of lonely ruined castles stood near the station, and Segni

crowned a steep mountain height three or four miles away.

Segni is an old Roman town, standing on the site of a still older city, and at a height of 2,300 feet above the sea. A conveyance, drawn by a team of mules in line, and which was probably built when wheels were just invented, met the train. A warrior sat on the box beside the driver, and another stepped inside, and instantly fell asleep ; we two, and a plentiful supply of straw, filled the coach. The whip cracked, the ropes stretched, and the mules careered over the plain to the foot of the steep stony track leading up the mountains to Segni ; a wild track it was, with never a house to be seen. The broad valley stretched below to the far-off blue mountains, where the hill towns of Anagni and Ferentino glistened in the sunshine : the rugged group of the Volscian mountains reared their peaks above our heads, and steep precipices descended into the valley below. The mules tugged, the ropes strained, and the bones of the old carriage creaked in every joint as we slowly mounted the toilsome track. Each bend and twist in the road revealed a fresh view—here a foaming torrent passed under a rude bridge ; there a clump of pine trees sheltered us for a brief space from the rays of a hot sun that brought out their sweet fragrance. I thought of the scientist in crowded Rome, but I envied him not. Perchance at that very moment he stood

within the mighty temple of St. Peter's, amid a throng of Cockney tourists listening to grand music, and gazing on the serene face of the aged Pope ; yet I envied him not ! Were not the fresh mountain breezes—blowing through the pine branches—music ? Was not their fragrant scent—incense ? Were not the blue canopy of Heaven and the vast amphitheatre of mountains greater than any temple made by hands, even though surmounted by the dome of St. Peter's itself ? So I envied him not !

The warrior still slept, his sword sheathed beside him ; I was alone with my thoughts, and as I looked out I saw the ancient cyclopean walls of Segni, and soon the ramshackle vehicle halted outside the frowning gateway. I shook the warrior ; he only snored, so I left him to his dreams, perchance of blood and rapine, and I was set on by a crowd of pestilent boys, who seized my packages. I swung round on them, and selecting one who stood looking wistfully on, I bade him lead the way to the hotel. Hotel, forsooth ! He turned within the city gate, and following a network of little streets, entered a court such as we might find in the lowest purlieus of crowded Liverpool ; he pointed to a flight of rude stone steps leading to a doorway, and left me. No sign-board graced this palatial hotel, and my heart sank as I gazed on its brown old walls and tiny windows, and as I again

thought of the scientist, perchance I envied him—I cannot say. I climbed the stair-way, and in the humble salon stood a woman with a pretty face, pleasing manners, and of open countenance. A fig for Rome and the scientist; what more could I want than this poor albergo could supply? I was shown a clean chamber with straw mattresses, but with spotless counterpane, where the casement opened high over the old walls of Segni, commanding a wide view of purple mountains and sunny vale. What more could I wish for? and all this for one lira per night! Base, indeed, the slave who could find a fault here. No milk of course, but my dinner should come on at six, if I would return at that time after exploring the town.

I wandered up the narrow street past the cathedral, past the knot of men and boys discussing the affairs of the city in the small piazza—for it was high holiday—and then out at the top of the town, where the old Church of S. Pietro stands on its cyclopean foundations—a remnant of the ancient city. The rough lime stone crags led me on and upward to the highest peak of the hill, past a great circular Roman cistern, where a few women were drawing water. A number of boys followed, or rather led the way, for I asked them to show me the ancient walls and the Porta Sarracinesca. From the peak I looked back on the grey old town stretching

down its crags, then down the rocks on the other side where huge blocks of stone, in parts almost hidden by earth and verdure, formed a broken line round the mountain top ; then a sort of pyramidical arch-way formed by great stones converging towards the top, and surmounted by one huge block, the ancient Porta Sarracinesca, built thousands of years ago by people who knew not the principle of the arch ; two of the boys stood in the gateway while I photographed it, and having paid them two pence, they considered themselves my guides and shewed me more of the ancient walls and a sally-port which was almost buried. We walked on and gazed over the wide stretches of mountain and valley, past many ancient towns, towards Rome on the one hand and Naples on the other ; the cuckoo shouted and I turned my money (I had still some left), for it was the first time that I had heard that bird. An old man passed by who exhibited a strange antique brass medallion, asking me three lira for the same ; on one side was a representation of Joseph and the infant Christ and on the other the Ascension. Did he take me for one of those rich Americans who ruin Italy for other travellers by their lavish expenditure ? I offered him one lira, but having no change I asked him to meet me at the palatial hotel as the sun sank behind the hills. When I returned to dinner I found the old man with the medallion, and after my landlord had ransacked

the town for change of a ten lira note, I paid him and he departed to his house.

Then that pretty woman—mine hostess—brought on hot soup and a whole pigeon, a welcome change from the regular meal of their tasteless steaks, which the Italians think we English cannot live without ; and two beautiful toddling babes came and gazed shyly on me from a distance, with finger in mouth and drooping face, where dark flashing eyes peered from under long black lashes ; and the cats became friendly and consumed the bones between them, and the pigeon flew away, leaving an empty dish, which the cats cleaned, and the meal was finished.

The broad walls of Segni run, with many an archway, past quaint old buildings ; and as the sun set long shadows of strange shapes were cast over the old stones, and each tiny child on the road way wore a shadow the length of a man. The distant Apennines faded into grey, then the snowy peaks lighted up with a tender pink, and the air of the town grew chill, as I once more sought the salon of the albergo. There sat the jolly-looking landlord and his pretty help-meet, busied over Chinese lanterns and candles. I interrogated them as to the use to which they were to be put, and heard that in the darkness of the night, an Easter procession would slowly wend its way around the walls of Segni, and the lanterns would be hung out from the

windows to heighten the effect. As it grew colder, I sat in my great coat to wait and watch, and various folk from the town came in to refresh themselves, and to see the procession ; among them were two ladies, friends of the hostess, the younger of whom was a beauty of the first rank. Such a profile I have rarely gazed on ! Grecian in its outline ; tinted ivory was her complexion ! black diamonds her eyes ! voice of liquid silver ! a black mantilla covered her raven locks, and as she leaned out of the window to gaze on the procession in the darkness of the night, the flaming torches from below, with the reflections from the many coloured lanterns, lighted up the face of a saint.

The night was dark and still ! distant strains of sacred music were borne upon the air, as, from a gloomy archway, slowly came a religious procession, intensely dramatic in its picturesqueness. I gazed on the shadowy figures pacing slowly beneath. After the trumpets, came many men clothed in white with scarlet capes, each bearing a flaming torch. There were many small children dressed as brides, followed by an image of the Virgin, and a chest covered by a great canopy. Men and women clothed in black came in long procession, two and two, singing dirge-like, melancholy strains, and all carrying flaming brands. Ever and anon, as the chant died away in the distance, fresh singers came on the scene, and the wild, weird

music, and the glow and smoke of the torches ascended in the night air.

The Vatican might thunder and the Cockneys might crowd St. Peter's, but for real pathos and heart-felt worship, poor little Segni on its mountain top, it seemed to me, was the equal of great Rome ; and its widow's mite stood before the grandeur, pomp, and wealth of the city of the Popes.

Half an hour further along the line leading to Rome I reached Velletri, a city beautifully situated on a hill, looking over the great plain to the Volscian mountains. The roadway from the station enters through great gates near a fine old church, and, skirting the city, passes many good houses, and public gardens where a fountain plays amid palm trees and in a short time the chief piazza is reached, and the cathedral, with its tall, graceful marble campanile standing at a short distance.

I asked an old man if that were the Duomo? He looked up at the clock and said that it was half-past three. I repeated my question, and he his answer, and then, in the mildest manner possible, I varied it by asking if that were the cathedral. This time he hotly and angrily replied that it was half-past three ! He was evidently a man of but one idea. I smiled a derisive smile and left him muttering blessings on the English nation. The town is very hilly and there are many streets of steps, but little Segni has

more arches and picturesque bits. There are good churches, and the Porta Napoli is guarded by massive round towers.

At the bottom of the Piazza, I gazed up at the gloomy looking Palazzo Lancelotti. The door was shut, but seeing a man enter, I darted in after him, and found myself in a corridor running nearly the whole length of the building. In front was a wide terrace bordered by a balustrade, rich in creepers, and cooled by the splash of a fountain. From the heat and glare of the piazza I had passed into a paradise ! At the end of the corridor an arch way framed a view of cypress trees against a back ground of blue mountain, and a wide flight of marble steps tempted me down to the garden. There, a broad terrace walk passed along the front of the mansion ; in the centre of the creeper-grown wall of the terrace a miniature cascade tumbled into a basin, where geese were enjoying a sunny bath. Above, the old palace rose to a great height, and I saw that a second open arcade ran along the front. The garden was delightfully wild, and paths descended into a thickly wooded park. Broken statues and marble pillars spoke silently of long past glories. As nobody said anything—there being nobody to say it—I explored the recesses of the wood, and then, further emboldened by the silence, I climbed the broad stairs to the upper arcade, where I came upon the kitchen,

and its inmates permitted me to look through the windows into the drawing and billiard rooms, and to photo. this long outer gallery, beautified by a blaze of flowers ; the ceiling and walls were elaborately sculptured in the Italian style with numerous caryatides and ornamental scroll work. The view out over the tree tops stretched afar to the Volscian mountains, and a silvery gleam on the sea glittered in the distance. It was a still sunny day, when not a leaf stirred, and I sat some time among the trees below the terrace, listening to the splash of the fountain, the hum of insects, and the song of birds.

I appeared to be the only visitor at the Albergo del Gallo, and I dined in a large hall, where the waiter visited me every quarter of an hour with a fresh dish, until he put the fruit on and left me for ever ; night came on, and for fear I should not find my way out if I delayed, I gat me up before the last expiring gleam of day-light faded, and enquired if there were music in the town. The waiter said "No"—but recommended me to go to the one café in the Piazza, and here I am, taking "Café nero" at 1½d per cup. It is certainly warmer here than in the hotel, also more cheerful with its blaze of light, and the waiter promises music at eight o'clock. Evidently about to begin, for a clown in white, and a gaudily bedizened, highly coloured female have just entered, and have disappeared behind

a curtain. Hurrah ! A pianist appears ; we shall hear and enjoy. The man in white assumes a black mask, comes out and sings a duet with the female, accompanied by tambourines ; and after a brief interval and a walk round—perhaps for the better exhibition of their costumes—the female sings a duet with the man in white in the black mask, and they again walk round. Suddenly the door opens and there enters another female, still more gaudy than the first, and with a pile of music ! Velletri is indeed a charming city. The audience increases ; cards and coffee go merrily on. The nightingale that sang in a tree during the small hours of last night is nowhere after this second female, who has just solo'd and retired behind the curtain. Solo from a dog—some evilly-disposed person or persons having stepped on his tail ; he looks round and comes to me for sympathy, his tail carefully turned under his body, and the man in white with the black mask comes round and collects half-pennies. I astonish him with a whole penny, whereupon, triumphal smash on the piano, and the man in white with the black mask sings a bravura with stupendous effect. Velletri is indeed a delightful city, and I had thought of leaving for Rome to-morrow—perish the thought !

The café fills, the mirth grows hilarious ; the first female comes on as if she had never appeared before,

and sings a solo—I hope she may not burst a blood-vessel, she evidently thinks she is in La Scala!—Tremendous applause from three men (probably candidates for her hand and heart). A pompous but evil-looking Italian has been parading the café for ten minutes, pretending to look for a friend, for he evidently has not 1½d wherewith to pay for a cup of coffee; at last he sits down alone, and does—and drinks—nothing. The nightingale is now at it, and not bad either. (Really Velletri is a grand place!) More halfpennies for the nightingale, who comes in person with a tray to smile and to collect, while the piano goes at lightning speed. The man in white with the black mask has recovered, and is now trying to drown the noise of the café by singing like an express train (think I'll ask the price for pension at the hotel). The first bedizened female is now singing like an escape from a gas pipe (I'll pay my bill and leave to-night if she lasts much longer). The nightingale before the curtain again, bless her! and the gas pipe comes round to collect. Now I see the folly of giving a whole penny right off. (What a sultry air Velletri has.) The large café is nearly full; the man in white with the black mask is carrying on low comedy with the gas pipe, talking, singing, laughing, crying; bravo, gas pipe! Nightingale very sweet, followed by a really good song from gas pipe I am told it is "La ritirata

dei marinai" (all the go in Naples now). I must get it ; it brings the house down, and she gives an encore ; why does not the world come to Velletri ?

Next morning.—That horrid café grew so unbearably hot that I had to leave it at 9-40 and rush out into the cool air. I shall leave Velletri at once, and hunt out the scientist in Rome ; then away to "fresh fields and pastures new."

CHAPTER . VIII.

A FORSAKEN CITY.

“Sweets of the wild ! that breathe and bloom
On this lone tower, this ivied wall ;
Lend to the gale a rich perfume,
And grace the ruin of its fall ;
Though doom'd, remote from careless eye, .
To smile, to flourish, and to die
In solitude sublime.
Oh ! ever may the spring renew
Your balmy scent and glowing hue,
To deck the robe of time !”

Mrs. Hemans.

In Rome I again found the scientist. He was working very hard, and I thought that he needed country air and change. I told him that he must come back with me to Velletri, to visit two or three towns in the Volscian mountains—Cori, Norma, and Ninfa. He heard me out, heaved a sigh over the comforts of Rome, and after depositing the bulk of the luggage at the hotel till our return, we left next day. The scientist had his doubts as to good dry beds, and what we should find to eat. I assured him that we should have nothing worse than straw to lie upon, and raw ham and dripping (for butter) to eat ; whereupon a mutual sigh over the flesh-pots of Egypt, and we caught the train.

The Italians are of strange manners and customs when travelling ; arrived at a station, out comes a time table which is looked at long and earnestly ; then the watch is consulted, and finding the two to agree, and the train to be going on with tolerable punctuality, the fact is so astonishing that the watch is held up to the ear to ascertain if it be really going. The result being satisfactory, the process does not occur again for another quarter of an hour or so. When an Italian is about to leave the carriage, he advertises the fact by standing up about five minutes before the train reaches the station, with all his parcels in his hands ; he does not attempt to open the door, but dropping his packages on the toes of those nearest him, he taps wildly at the window until the porter comes to open for him.

Velletri was soon reached, and a carriage took us to the piazza, where we found the mail coach about to start for Cori. Away over the plain we went, a somewhat wearisome ride, for down came a deluge of rain, and the thunder boomed, the lightning flashed, and the rest of the passengers preferred asphyxiation to a little damp, and must have all the windows closed tight. It was dark when we ascended the steep mountain road to the clean little inn at Cori. A hot supper was soon provided, and while we were engaged on soup and beef-steak, a man came in to be consulted upon the

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best way of reaching Norma and Ninfa. He was of an open countenance, but a villain and a knave to boot ; he carefully omitted to state that there was a mule track along the foot of the mountains leading to Ninfa (about seven miles), for he had fully determined that we should drive there and back in "milord" style—carriage and pair ; so he said there was a way to Norma over the mountains, but it was "*strada bruta*," and was not feasible ; that he would drive us over the plain to Ninfa, fifteen miles and the same back, for 20 lira. In a weak moment we agreed to take him. Had we but remembered Hare's mention of the bridle path at the foot of the hills, we might have walked each way. We started at seven a.m. on our long cold drive, striking right out into the plain to a town about eight miles away, Cisterna—the ancient Appii Forum and the Three Taverns. Whether there is even one tavern there now I cannot say, but there was not an orange to be had in all that walled town. Now the road took a turn back, along the second side of a triangle, and in due time we sighted a tall tower standing in marshy land at the base of a steep mountain side. We passed over a river, and through meadows, where, amid rank grass, wild-looking cattle roamed and fed, tended by shepherds almost as shaggy as themselves. Then the ruins of Ninfa came suddenly into sight. The sunshine burst forth, lighting up



[illegible][illegible]





gloriously the beautiful dead city. Its massive square red tower, still standing over the long ruined monastery, wears a crown of green ! for trees are growing on its summit, and Nature has claimed even the highest point of Ninfa for her own.

Why this exquisite little walled town was ever built in a hollow, where a river runs through and around it, is a mystery only known to its founders, who settled there in the 12th century ; certain it is that malaria long since exterminated the inhabitants, or drove them from their homes in Ninfa to find more healthy dwellings elsewhere. And now, in the summer time it is dangerous to linger after sunset within its walls ; but at dusk the fairies issue forth from the bushes and flowers, and sport by the rippling waters in the cold moonlight, for on them the malaria has no evil effects, and so they have the place to themselves. In the 12th century the Frangipani possessed Ninfa and held it till the end of the 13th. The Gaetani obtained it, and their descendants retain it to this day. Pope Alexander III. was consecrated here in 1159.

The high tower stands by a deep pool, clear as crystal ; tall reeds grow around the edges, and the water laps the old wall. It is said that from the top of the tower "La Bella Ninfa" threw herself into the pool, to avoid a marriage determined on by her parents but distasteful to herself. In memory of the deed the

city was called after her. "The evil that men do lives after them ; the good is oft interred with their bones." Yet be it not ours to blame her rashness ; we hear nothing of the despised lover, and know not what manner of man he was.

A river runs through the town , and near to an old mill, still in use, a few women were washing clothes as they knelt on the grassy bank, "where there is a willow grows aslant the brook." Our driver put his horses up at the mill, retired into the shade, and was soon asleep, leaving us to roam at will among the ruins. Part of the old monastery garden near the tower is still under cultivation, and an arched marble entrance, delicately sculptured with vine leaves and grapes, leads thereto. Crossing the grass-grown street we see the ruined chancel of the church, with the frescoes still lingering on its walls, while the creepers and flowers grow in profusion, hanging about its ancient windows. Ivy-girt walls and many shattered towers still surround the desolate town ; the river flows through tangled briers at their feet, and the cattle come to cool themselves in the running water. The remains of many a handsome building, some of them with machicolated battlements, stand within the city ; they are all beautified and cared for by the ivy, briers, and creepers, which climb about at will, rendering them superlatively lovely in their death and decay. All was

still, in the hot sunshine ; not a leaf moved as we wandered silently among the ruins ; only the hum of insects and the songs of birds made music among the homes of people long since passed away. But the day was relentlessly speeding on ; and as we raised our eyes to the mountains we could see the old grey town of Norma seated on her crags, 1,000 feet above ; and we tore ourselves away from lovely Ninfa, to climb the steep limestone hills through a shady grove of ancient gnarled olive trees, and came out on the rocky height leading to the little town, with its weather-beaten houses clinging 'like swallows' nests to the mountain side. There lay Ninfa, far below, with its pool and river, and the wide plain beyond.

We climbed the narrow, stony street, past many a dark hovel, where the people sat gossiping round the doors ; and then, reaching the wide main street, we spied a wretched *trattoria*, where a number of brigands sat drinking within the dark interior. These—for lack of better entertainment, and because that we were slowly dying with thirst—we joined, and threw in our lot amongst ; and the woman of the house came and looked on us and smiled, and for want of a better and happier simile I must liken it unto the grin of a death's head. Then she laid her head on her hand (still looking at us), thereby asking us if we would sleep there ! We rather thought not, and hieing us into the

sunlight once more, we continued up the street, asking for the ruins of ancient Norba, one of the earliest of all Roman colonies. But the inhabitants of Norma knew not Norba ; they only smiled and shook their heads, and said that we were *now* in Norma, thinking, no doubt, in their ignorance, that we were afflicted with colds in our heads, and so could not pronounce the name aright. So we passed on through their city, and by a happy chance met an old man who was somewhat better versed in the history of his forbears, and to him we propounded our riddle ; whereupon the patriarch turned round and pointed up the mountain side, to certain cyclopean remains of walls and gateways—there was the ancient Norba, but the people of Norma knew it not.

Time was fleeting, and we had far to go ; so coming to the edge of the cliffs, and seeing Ninfa right below, we struck straight down in a bee line. Hard work it was, and very good exercise ; but to hungry men who could not reasonably expect a mouthful for many hours to come, it was rather wearying. We woke our driver up, and were soon returning on our long journey to Cori.

The mail coach leaves Cori for Velletri at 3 p.m., and it we must catch or stay the night in Cori. This, unfortunately, want of time forbade, for there are numerous ancient remains at Cori which we were obliged to miss seeing, and as the subject is a sore one

we will not refer to it again. Our horses cared not whether we caught the mail coach or missed it, and they travelled slowly; but on entering the town we beheld the coach standing ready to depart, and the managers fuming, forasmuch as they were late, and were kept waiting for two carabineers, who had engaged the only two outside seats, and who presently came sauntering up, smoking penny cigars. Well for us that it was so, for through it we caught our coach. The military soon tired of the outside seats—for Italians are much happier cooped up, than in the breezy open air—and so we got their places, and there being really only room for one, I sat on the knife-board, my legs dangling over the horses; and when, by reason of much shaking, I was nearly cut through at the knees, we stayed at a town half way to Velletri, when a large parcel was hauled up and put on the knife-board. The good-natured driver sat on it, leaving us the box seat, which was comparatively comfortable, except when the heavily-loaded vehicle rocked like a ship at sea, which it generally did.

In due time we reached Velletri, and, it being six o'clock, and having tasted no food since seven a.m., we made for the Albergo del Gallo, and wandered upstairs to find all the doors locked. A man came down from the upper rooms and gazed at us; a damsel did the same, and both left us; at last the waiter whom I had

known before, appeared, and in a voice trembling with emotion told us that the padrone had just then breathed his last ! Upon this we felt very sorry, but concluding that we should very soon do the same if not supplied with food, we made a stirring appeal to the waiter, who set the paralyzed household going in the matter of cooking, served us up a good dinner, and we soon departed by train for Rome. There we enjoyed the sweets of civilization for a brief space, supping at the *Café Venezia*, listening to sweet music the while.

A FAIRY CITY.

A lofty tower, tree crowned ;
A reedy, shining mere ;
A river wandering round,
Rippling, glittering, clear.

Ivied ruins and brambles,
Towers and mossy walls,
Sheltered, sunny rambles,
Desolate, frescoed halls.

Croaking frogs and lizards,
Slimy creeping snakes,
Odds and ends for wizards,
But Ninfa ! • • •

Here the poem unfortunately breaks off abruptly, as though the writer were late for a train, and we are left to imagine the rest. The scientist suggested "takes the cakes" as the missing poetical pendant, but that is manifestly an anachronism.

It was unreasonable to expect that the civilizations

and constraints of Rome would be anything but irksome, after the freedom, scents, sights and mountain air which we had just left. I was fast becoming a Bohemian in my tastes. A tram 'bus made me savage; Cockneys, dandies and well-dressed people had become eye-sores and abominations. Give me the brigands, the black laughing eyes, and the wild mountain songs again. The scientist showed signs of relapsing into city ways, and must be rescued at once and at any cost! I said, "It is time that we had an excursion"—(for it must be remembered that we had spent an evening and a night in Rome, since we were in Ninfa!)—"Shall it be to Tivoli, to the villas of Frascati, or to the lakes of Albano and Nemi? Any one of them for me, for I shall visit them all." The scientist voted for the lakes, and that we should go the next day.

The Albanian hills were bathed in a pearly morning haze, as we approached them over the wide campagna. We left the train at Castel Gandolfo, a small town, on the shore of the great crater lake of Albano which is six miles in circumference, and 490 feet deep. The road winds up from the station, and traverses the wooded heights, where are grand views of its steep forest-clad banks. Following an avenue of ilex trees we had many peeps of the water far below; and then, traversing green woods, we walked on to the town of Ariccia, and after passing four viaducts we came to Genzano. There,

it being by this time mid-day, a humble *trattoria* furnished a good meal; and rising up to walk towards Nemi we followed the directions of an old woman, with a face like a dried up water-course. It was a white road, without shade, and the sun blazed over head. In fifteen minutes, a country-man told us we were quite on the wrong track, and we had to retrace our steps. Our talk was of the old woman, and how nice it would be to meet her again, but when we reached the spot where we had first met her, behold she had moved on, and fortunately for her we saw her no more, and our intended speeches were never uttered to mortal ear. It were indeed a sorry joke if a man, standing at Charing Cross, London, asking his way to Kensington, were directed to Bethnal Green; and yet were we in a like parlous predicament, and had not even the satisfaction of telling that old lady that in England it was not considered a kind action to send a man east when he wanted to go west. Perhaps we may meet again some day, and methinks I should recognise that dried up water-course face.

A turn in the road revealed the loveliest and wildest of all crater lakes—lake Nemi. There it lay, embosomed in woods, its still, deep, clear water, six hundred feet below us—an almost perfect circle of three miles round.

“Where shall you find, in foreign land,
So lone a lake, so sweet a strand!”—LAKE NEMI.

Sir Walter Scott is answered,

“There is no breeze upon the fern,
No ripple on the lake;
Upon her eyrie nods the erne.
The deer has sought the brake.”

Nemi! they are all there, if not the deer, then something else. We stood spell-bound. The town of Genzano hung on the wooded precipice to our left, the sun behind it throwing that side into deep purple shadow. Opposite, on a steep rock rising up from the lake like a fairy vision, the old town of Nemi, with its graceful round tower, shone in the golden sunlight. The bright browns and greens of early spring foliage descended to the edge of the little mirror far below, and mountain behind mountain receded and faded into the dim distance. Which road? One led to Nemi along the tops; the other—a narrow path—wound deeply down among the bright green woods, all melodious with nightingales. We chose the narrow path, and went rapidly down among the over-arching trees, staying now and again to gaze on the ever changing landscape and the glimpses of sunny lake seen through the branches.

“I heard the water lapping on the crag.
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.”

The winding path skirted the water's edge, and on the banks grew flowers in profusion, and of countless variety. There were the pure white narcissus, the

warm crimson cyclamen carpetting the woods; the blue periwinkle, tall ferns, and large tufts of the handsome nigram, anemones both blue and red, and smaller white varieties, with quantities of garlic. As we crept around through this paradise of flowers, opposite the dark precipice under Genzano, we looked upward, and there, right over head, stood the tall tower of Nemi glistening in sunshine, with six hundred feet of rocky height between us and it. We must ascend, the heat was intense ; time was on the wing and we had far to go. We took a short, stiff cut upwards, coming to a narrow path making an uncertain run in a horizontal direction. Following its course, we reached a place where a landslip had occurred; and, being doubtful in our minds as to the right way, each took a separate course. The scientist, looking up at the perpendicular rocks above, declared his intention of scaling the rocks, and of entering the town over its walls. Such a course would be fraught with much danger, and commended not itself to my mind, seeming but pure foolhardiness ; but then he had climbed the summits of Monte Rosa and Mont Blanc, while I have only gazed on them from a distance. And so we parted, he, striking straight upward, taking my box of extra plates with him ; I, carefully picking my way over the landslip, pursuing the narrow path under the cliff; but it only led me to a tiny parcel of ground which some thrifty soul had

cleared, with the intent to grow vegetables thereon. My further course in that direction was blocked by thick impenetrable jungle and rocks. I had my camera box over my shoulder as usual ; I looked upwards, and in so doing felt it slip down the sticks, and caught it just in time to prevent it being dashed down through the forest of tree trunks, to where the lake gleamed, 500 feet below, and into its flood, 360 feet in depth. I tremble to think what would have been the consequence of such an event. I should inevitably have followed it—and any ardent lover of photography will sympathise with me—for otherwise, what end or purpose in nature could I serve? A wandering maniac, pursuing an aimless course through the fair land of Italy, without a camera ! without a home ! and without a friend ! for I recalled with horror the suicidal course of the scientist. I mopped my fevered brow as I sat there, and thought on these things, looking down at the dark blue waters of the lake below, imagining how they would have closed over me, had I dived into their depths. Who knows but—like Jules Verne's hero—I might have worked down through the crater of the extinct volcano, and reached the centre of the earth ! What a sublime episode for a lecture ! But a truce to ravings ; there I sat, in the intense quiet of a solitude only broken by the sighing of the breeze among the branches. The day waned ; I must be up and doing.

There was nothing for it but to retrace my steps ! With a thankful heart I gathered up my things and turned, scanning every inch of the narrow footway, and so I again reached the landslip, where I had last seen the scientist. I looked down—was it fancy, or were the tall grass and ferns bent and broken as though by a falling body ? And then one of those instantaneous brain photographs flashed, paralyzing the imagination by a stern dread of an awful disaster. Was that a faint cry from far, far below ? Had I lost my spare slides for ever ? Had the companion of my travels also perished ? How could I face his wife and bairns in a far-off land ? No ! I must find him, or for ever remain an exile, wandering round the border of that awful lake, till my ragged locks grew grey and silvered, my nails became like eagle's talons, and my clothes fell off in rags. Again that faint, far off call. I holloed, but the distant echoes reverberated from the surrounding precipices, and from the deep lake below—shrieking but in mockery, and dying but to leave a sad moaning of the breeze among the tree tops.

I went back to the point where we had struck the path, and on critical examination I found that the one by which we had ascended crossed this, by going round a thick tree trunk. We had missed it ; a short stiff pull landed me on the broader track which led to the gateway of the town, a picturesque arch, half

hidden by rocks and trees. Men and mules were descending, and while picturing them (for the photographic instinct was still uppermost), the scientist appeared, walking through the ancient portal! We fell, as it were, on each other's necks. There are times and scenes which baffle words; he was older, and in his eyes there was a far off look; perchance he thought of the loved ones at home. I know not, but I know that he turned the Kodak on a woman and baby who were descending, and secured an admirable picture. The cries which I had heard were not imaginary, for he had been in deadly peril; climbing upward he had reached a point where he could neither proceed or retrace his steps. He was under the high wall of the old town, and thinking that I might have reached the goal, he had holloed loudly, in hope that I might hear him and lower a rope; but succour came not, and he had crawled along under the walls and so reached the gate, bringing my twelve plates with him.

The sun was already low on the horizon as we gazed down on the still lake, from the little piazza at the foot of Nemi's tall tower. We had far to go, and after taking our fill from the fountain and a last look on a scene which neither of us would soon forget, we pursued a narrow lane leading over the hills in the direction of Albano. As we quitted the town, many

folk offered to guide us, but we scouted the idea. Had we encountered so many unforeseen perils to lose our way while following a clearly defined track? We knew not that we were entering a jungle which extends for many miles, and where there is not a sign post, nor a human habitation; a jungle, intersected by deep paths only known to the woodman and the lonely charcoal burner. We were soon completely lost! After wandering for some miles, hungry and footsore, we chanced on a small clearing where woodcutters were at work; they showed us a deep, stony, watery lane, telling us to go straight on and we would reach Albano. If a corkscrew be straight, then our course was clear, but as it was, it twisted like a snake, and paths diverged at all points.

At last the edge of the forest was reached, and we saw the town of Ariccia at a distance. A carriage took us the last mile to Albano, where we had time for tea before the train left.

The lower orders of Italians are despicable folk; they do all they can to hinder English people from visiting their country, by omitting to put up sign posts, and by lying and cheating on every opportunity. Sign posts, they think, would injure the calling of the guides. A nice looking boy came up to us at the station and said that the train would not leave till 7-30; we showed him the time bill 7-11, but he said that it was

wrong, again affirming that the train would not leave till 7-30, and that we would have time for a drive in his carriage. The train left punctually at 7-11, and that boy had lied deliberately with the hope of driving us all the way to Rome after the train (the last one) had departed. Such behaviour is hardly credible, but it is a fact, and that boy ought to be picking oakum instead of driving a carriage.

CHAPTER IX.

FRASCATI.

“ Lo, Nemi ! navell’d in the woody hills
So far, that the uprooting wind which tears
The oak from his foundation, and which spills
The ocean o’er its boundary, and bears
Its foam against the skies, reluctant spares
The oval mirror of thy glassy lake :
And calm as cherish’d hate, its surface wears
A deep cold settled aspect nought can shake,
All coil’d into itself and round, as sleeps the snake.”
Childe Harold.

After a day or two spent in Rome, the time came when I had to part company from the scientist, for he must return home and leave me to wander on alone, seeking the picturesque and lovely among the many beautiful country resorts bordering the Roman Campagna ; and so one early morning, when all was sunny, warm, and still, I took a place in the train for Frascati. The distant mountains across the Campagna were bathed in delicate pearly mist as we steamed out of Rome, past the ancient ruined aqueducts, and over the green rolling prairie to where Frascati sits on her hills, fifteen miles to the south-east. The train winds slowly upward and stays at the terminus, by the gate of the town under the small public gardens.

The ancient Tusculum (of which more anon) was situated high up on the hill above ; it was destroyed by the Romans in 1191, and Frascati sprang up on the ruins of a former villa overgrown with underwood (*frasche*), which gave the town its name. The cathedral of S. Pietro faces the piazza, and inside there is a tablet to Charles Edward, the young Pretender, who died at Frascati in 1788. The town is charming in its position, and you may revel in the gardens of its many villas with their handsome fountains, cascades, rivulets, ancient trees and sculptures. They are open to the public, though the wily gardener sometimes sits by the closed gate, that he may enjoy the pleasure of opening it for visitors. The fine old *palazzos* stand, looking over the grand wide Campagna to the purple mountains, and to Rome, telling of the grandeur long past, when the owners—chiefly cardinals, who built them—lived there in state. Now many of them have a deserted look, and the largest—the villa Mondragone—is a Jesuit College. The fountains and terraces are hoary with age, the trees are grand, healthy old giants, putting forth fresh leaves year by year, increasing in beauty as they grow in size. The brooks babble on, the cascades pour forth their eternal music, the fountains glitter and sparkle in the sunshine, but man enjoys it all only for a brief space ; he looks on it for a few years and is gone, and as we gaze up at the old

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façades the thought comes—the Cardinals, where are *they*?

“Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying ;
And this same flower that blooms to-day,
To-morrow will be dying.”

The first of these grand old gardens is that of the Villa Torlonia, entered by a carriage drive leading to great flights of steps which ascend to the first terrace. There are two wide roads and four of these great flights all leading to the terrace: two of the flights are probably as wide as the noted steps of the Trinita de Monte in Rome. Such a lavish display surely can be found nowhere else; they are ornamental, but almost useless. Mossgrown and ancient they look, and the balustrades along the broad walk above are like unto them. Then come groves of giant ilex trees, and long avenues where you may walk in the cool shade, listening to the quiet splash of the fountains and the songs of many birds. There are ponds and cascades, and everything that tends to make life delicious in the warm Italian sunshine.

In the garden of the great villa Aldobrandini—now the property of the Borghese family—there are fountains, terraces, and avenues innumerable, and a forest of venerable plane trees whose trunks are many of them hollow by reason of their great age. Water tumbles in cascades, and fountains play amid numerous

statues built in a semi-circular terrace, whose crumbling walls overlook a miniature lake. Pan with his pipes is seated in one niche ; Atlas stands in the centre, with the globe upon his shoulders, everlastingly undergoing a cold shower bath, which has covered him with a wet, mossy verdure ; the maiden hair grows profusely in the drip of the fountains, and the wild birds come to bathe in the waters.

A shady lane leads up the hill, past a Cappuccin church among the woods of the villa Tusculana. Here, from the wooded terrace, there is a grand view over forest grown mountain sides, dotted by towns, villas, and monasteries ; and on a wooded height, in the middle distance, we see the largest of Frascati's villas, the villa Mondragone, best visited on returning from Tusculum, whither I was now bound. But how to find the way ? There were many lanes ! which was the right one ? While I was considering, an Italian gentleman came wandering past ; to him I put the question and received a wrinkle in reply. The way, he said, was not easy to find, for there were many turnings. I must begin by following a lane paved up the centre with large stones, and then keep a sharp look out for dabs of red paint on the tree trunks. Without knowing of these dabs, they would escape notice, but, as it was, they proved an infallible guide. I met and passed but few people during my delightful walk up to the ruins of old

Tusculum ; a deep shady lane, beautified by anemones, periwinkles, and many other flowers, sheltered me from the hot rays of the sun. Nightingales sang overhead, and through the branches of the trees, ever and anon, I caught glimpses of far off blue mountains and wooded hill-side. The first portion of old Tusculum upon which I came was the amphitheatre ; bright yellow lichens clung to its grey stones ; broken moss-grown pillars lay on the ground, and in the dark crevices and vaults the maiden-hair flourished, and countless green lizards ran over the warm red bricks and fallen walls. Trees grew thickly round about, and the utter loneliness of the place was such that one could hardly realise the gay scenes which enlivened the old amphitheatre long centuries ago. And now I came to a thick pine wood, whose delicious, delicate fragrance scented the breeze ; then came more ruins, excavated by Prince Aldobrandini ; gloomy old halls and dark cave-like recesses, where bandits might yet lurk, to come out on the solitary traveller. In the year 1810 a band of brigands made these ruins their home, and descended on the villa Tusculana, where then abode Prince Lucien Buonaparte. By the timely notice of a servant the prince and some of his retinue escaped ; but he was obliged to pay the sum of 6,000 crowns to the bold brigands before his people were liberated. Fortunately for me, the day for such deeds was long past, for there was no prince at

hand to ransom me, and I tremble to think how lightly my friends in a far land might value me, were I thus put up to the highest bidder.

And now, on a green knoll, I perceived a curious building, which at first sight I took to be a museum, but with its curiosities all on the exterior. A marble figure of a man was built into one corner; in his day he was probably a proud senator of grand old Tusculum when in its prime; now—in effigy—he served as part of the walls of a cow-shed! Near him, and immured in the stones, stood a headless Venus. Poor thing, it was well she had lost her head, for in such a position she could but be a laughing stock for the rude hinds who placed her there. Busts and other portions of statues which had at one time graced the villas of Tusculum—perhaps that of Cicero—were here exposed to the rain and tempests of winter, and to the hot beams of the summer sun; melancholy reminders of the time when the brave old city upheld her peace principles against the domineering power of proud old Rome on her seven hills across the campagna far below.

Near here are the excavated seats of a theatre, and as we sit among the giant pine trees, gazing far over the stretch of country towards the Alban hills, let us try to realise the situation, taking a lesson to ourselves in this war-like century from the manner in which the peaceful

inhabitants of this mountain city received the threats of powerful warlike Rome, in B.C. 379.

"But the Tusculans would not accept this declaration of hostilities, and opposed the Roman arms in a manner that has scarcely been paralleled before or since. When Camillus entered their territory he found the peasants engaged in their usual avocations; provisions of all sorts were offered to his army, the gates of the town were standing open, and as the legions defiled through the streets in all the panoply of war, the citizens within, like the countrymen without, were seen intent upon their daily business, the schools resounded with the hum of pupils, and not the slightest token of hostile preparation could be discerned. Then Camillus invited the Tusculan dictator to Rome. When he appeared before the senate in the Curia Hostila, not only were the existing treaties with Tusculum confirmed, but the Roman franchise was shortly afterwards bestowed upon it, a privilege at that time rarely conferred."—Smith's Dict. of Greek and Roman Geography.

How differently we manage these things now-a-days! Can we boast of our 19th century civilization in this matter? Rather let us bow our heads to the primitive folk of Tusculum, who peacefully pursued their avocations in the face of an overwhelming adversary, trusting that right would prevail. Where does our

boasted Christianity come in after this far-off pagan faith? Let us look to it that we are not retrograding, and let modern Italy look to it! her ploughs are too few, her death instruments too many. We want more singing and less wailing—the pagan and his sublime faith, rather than the Christian and his powder.

Above the theatre rises the hill of the Arx; a castle stood here, on a height of 2,220 feet above the sea, but the mediæval Counts of Tusculum were of a degenerate race, and the castle was levelled to the ground by the Romans in the 12th century. A cairn marks the site; I climbed the rocks and sat and mused by its stones, while my eye wandered over a wide and lovely view, teeming with historical associations. There were the Alban mountains above their still deep lakes and towns, many a hill-top city, thick woods descending the hill, and climbing again to the monastery of Camaldoli; and, far below, the great villa of Mondragone, looking over the plain. It was two o'clock, and I suddenly found that I was hungry, and that there was nothing to eat nearer than Frascati. Down I plunged through dense woods, taking a bee-line over steep hill-side meadows and through copses, past meandering streams, until, over a valley, I saw the walls of the villa Mondragone; following their course I came to the great gateway and entered the garden.

A splendid avenue of giant cypress trees leads up to

the great high terrace. There is a hugeness, dignity, and lonely melancholy about this terrace, with its long balustrades and dried-up fountain, that is most impressive. The long façade of the gloomy palace looks out upon it ; as I stood there I heard the strains of an organ within the dim interior. A tired gardener sleeps out the heat, his head resting on the basin rim of the fountain, and peacocks disport themselves on the balustrades. The glory of grand old Mondragone has departed, the water has ceased to flow from its fountains, and it is but a memory of the past. Let us seek the next villa. Down a shady lane, past high walls, we reach the old arched gateway of the Villa Taverna. The arch, surmounted by stone eagles, promises much, and a long, handsome carriage drive ascends among fine old trees. But it ends in disappointment ; the villa is ugly and has nothing to show. Not so its neighbour, the Villa Falconieri—the oldest in Frascati—planned by Cardinal Ruffini before the year 1550. Great high walls nearly surround the grounds, and the entrance gate is a memorable relic, such as is not often seen, for under the upper part of the arch an aged oak has sent its boughs. The gardens are in a half wild state, and there are numerous picturesque arched gateways.

By this time I was ravenous, for it was after four o'clock. Dinner ensued, and while a calm, grand

sunset gradually darkened into night, I stood on the hillside, above a quiet old country church, and gazed afar over the wide campagna, to where the dome of St. Peter's was yet visible in the evening haze which enveloped the distant city.

“ All wandering sounds and motions die
In the silent glory of the sky.”

CHAPTER X.

TIVOLI.

“Wher’er we gaze—around, above, below,
What rainbow tints, what magic charms are found !
Rock, river, forest, mountain, all abound,
And bluest skies that harmonise the whole ;
Beneath, the distant torrent’s rushing sound
Tells where the volumed cataract doth roll
Between those hanging rocks, that shock yet please the
soul.” *Byron.*

Tivoli was en fête ! a brass band paraded the streets ; the little piazza, and the bridge which spans the wooded gorge where the falls thunder down with ceaseless roar, were crowded with the towns-folk. Banners waved and trumpets clanged as a procession wound slowly through the town. Could all this display be but to celebrate my arrival ? I thought not, and further investigation proved that I was correct. The red cross waved on high, betokening the presence of a large gathering of the Red Cross Ambulance Society. They were enjoying a day’s excursion from Rome, and Tivoli meant to do them honour ; and right royally she did it, as the sequel will show. But we anticipate.

Once more I had passed the night in Rome, waking at intervals to listen to the splendid singing of a nightingale, which—weather permitting—sang nightly in a tree near our hotel. Then a glorious morning dawned, and I took train over the wide campagna. We passed a ruined castle on a hill, and then came the familiar smell as of Widnes at its worst ; and we stayed a few minutes, to let down passengers who desired a closer acquaintance with the white water of the sulphur baths, and with the fragrance thereof. We soon left this last expiring effort of a volcano behind and passed on, over land where are still to be seen huge blocks of travertine, relics of the time, long centuries back, when countless slaves were made to tug and pull such blocks over the campagna, by their cruel task-masters, for the building of proud Rome. In due time the train came to the foot of the Sabine hills, and slowly wound up their steep sides until a glorious view of Tivoli—the ancient Tibur—suddenly came in sight. Nothing could exceed the beauty of this wonderful panorama. Down below lies the deep valley of the Anio, with the rushing river coursing wildly through its rocky bed. The towers, churches, and palaces of Tivoli climb the heights opposite. Numerous *cascatelles* pour down from the honey-combed rocks, gleaming white in the sun-shine among the brilliant green verdure, and the cool greys of the old buildings ; while to the left is

seen one of the great falls, thundering down from its high rocks and dashing into clouds of foam, to be spanned by a splendid rainbow ; the passengers crowd to the windows to marvel at the magic scenes of fleeting loveliness ! We enter a tunnel and all is over. We have had a foretaste of Tivoli, and from that minute are at one with old Horace.

“ Tibur !—sweet colony of Greece !—
There let my devious wanderings cease ;—
There would I wait old age in peace,
There calmly dwelling.”

Yet a patriotic feeling mingles in the cup, and a love of home comes uppermost : we cannot relinquish even far off prosy Birkenhead ! no, perish the thought ! we will “never desert Mr. Micawber.” But we will enjoy Tivoli to the full while we have it ; and so when the train pulls up at the station, I pass over the crowded bridge, through the thronged piazza, and make straight for the hotel Sibyl with its hospitable awning spread almost under the grand old Corinthian columns of the Temple of the Sibyl, and again Horace’s temptation steals upon me !

I am assigned comfortable quarters at a reasonable figure ; the music of the falls penetrates the apartment. The pretty, well-dressed daughter of the house superintends the macaroni and other delicacies with which I am shortly regaled. Yes ! Horace is right after all, but then he had a villa, probably many slaves, and a good

banking account. There are difficulties in the way! But anyone may enjoy an afternoon down in the wooded gorge among the falls and grottos; so I walked down in the sunshine along the shady paths that twist under rocky heights, over precipices, through grottos and galleries, within sound of many waters and songs of birds. Here a railed balcony stands over an abyss, where the great artificial fall thunders from a tunnel over-head; and close to, within camera shot, a brilliant rainbow spans the white clouds of spray far down below; here's a chance for the long boasted photography in colours! As it is, the rainbow makes an arch right across the plate, but it is merely a colourless ghost of a scene which neither the black art or the artist's brush can hope to grasp.

"The silver water-dust in puffs arose,
And turned to dust of jewels in the sun."

I pass down to the foot of the other great fall. For thousands, perhaps millions of years, this fall has poured its vast volumes of water over these moss-grown cliffs, and I gaze on a scene as much within the grasp of the art I follow, as any waterfall can be. A pine-clad summit, a sheer fall of over 300 feet, where, while most of the water is in delicate shadow, the sunbeams slant across, lighting up the green precipitous moss-grown rock, casting a poetic glamour over the valley, far beyond my power to describe. An absolute stillness

reigns down here ; among the trees and grasses not a leaf moves ! here a pine, in dark shadow, contrasts with a light oak just bursting into foliage, its sun-lit leaves standing out against the wet, dark, moss-grown foot of the precipice opposite, where the swirl of water comes down into a dark, still pool, standing among ferns and grasses. From this bit of path-way the picture is perfect, for nature supplies just the foreground to set it off, in a few tall reeds, which stand as though petrified in the utter stillness.

Each turn yields a fresh view—an old rustic bridge, a tree standing across the fall, a rocky fern-grown height, or a grassy knoll. Horace is right ! It is heaven on earth. I wandered down yet lower, where the path grew almost dark, and descended slippery moss-grown steps, where a fine rain constantly falls ; further progress is blocked up by stupendous rocks, and the water escapes through a dark hole below, wide enough to show—as a picture—a glimpse of sunlit valley beyond. Now face the fall. From this point, you see a vast network of rocks and water ; you are at the foot of the great cascade, where it dashes into countless rushing torrents over boulder and rock. But a shower bath is not pleasant with one's clothes on, so I speedily ascended, crossed the valley and climbed the path in search of the Grotto of Neptune. I was alone, but as I followed the tortuous twistings and

climbed the many steps, I passed a fair young creature, beautiful as one of Albion's daughters.

“Oh woman ! whose form and whose soul
Are the spell and the light of each path we pursue.
Whether sunn'd in the tropics or chill'd at the pole,
If woman be there, there is happiness too.”

She turned, she hesitated ! I passed on, and while I stood gazing on a fresh scene, again that fairy vision. How beautiful ! how like a startled fawn ! Perchance there was that in my eye which gave her confidence ! I know not, but in silvery accents she falteringly asked if I could tell her the way to the Grotto of Neptune. Singularly enough, I was following that quest myself— I told her so ; and now I determined to find it or die. We were both exiles from the same far land ; with Byron we had both said, “My native land, good-night.” Perchance we both agreed with Horace ; I know I did for the moment.

We found the dark galleries, carved through the rock ; we found Neptune's Grotto, where a dark volume of water issues mysteriously from unseen cavernous depths, to tumble over the rocks and join the wild stream below. We left the gloomy cave, and came again into the warm sunshine, with the blue sky and the white fleecy clouds overhead, and she confided to me that she was alone, and so had ventured on asking me the way ; that it was not pleasant to be alone. Did I hear a stifled sigh, or was it a spice-laden

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zephyr which had lost its way among the pines? Old Horace was surely right—what place more exquisite than that sun-lit vale of waters? I also was alone, yet I told her not, but turning aside, sat down on a rail overlooking the mighty fall to think it out. No guiding light illumined my lonely path while I sat; no fresh course opened out before me; she must go one way, I another! Farewell for ever, till we meet again. Life is full of such lights and shades. A constant sunshine would pall; we must needs have rain, hail and storms, and the sun shines all the brighter for them afterwards. A brilliant ray had shone, and a cloud had passed over the sun—that was all.

I climbed a steep path and left the glen by the temple of the Sibyl, and hied me straight to the Villa D'Este, where are gardens unsurpassed by any in Italy. The palace itself was built for Cardinal Ippolito D'Este in 1549, and is an immense pile, grand in its simple severity. It stands on the hillside, high above its noble gardens; from the long broad terrace in front you look on the one hand, between tall giant cypress trees, to the town of Tivoli; walk to the other end of the terrace, and from an embrasure you gaze down on the campagna far below, and over the wide rolling surface towards Rome. Two circular flights of steps lead down to the next terrace, their old stone balustrades curving round a large basin where, from the

water, rises a moss-grown rock, crowned by a fountain throwing its water upward towards the sky. At one end of the second terrace are many fountains; cataracts flow down near miniature ruins; slanting bridges span little streams descending from small lakes! fountains spurt from the deck of a stone ship, and a stone wolf suckles the ancient forms of Romulus and Remus!

Leaving this curious assemblage we pass along a shaded terrace, where is a narrow river, coursing among moss-covered stones, and supplied by a constant succession of streams and fountains; this leads to a great cascade falling over a fern-grown grotto into a still pool. There are more terraces, a long series of lakes, and groves of ancient cypress trees, some of whose trunks measure four feet in diameter. Velvety grass, open glades cooled by fountains innumerable, and shady groves where are seats and lounges in stone. From the lowest part of the garden you can gaze back on the great stern-looking palace, high up on the hill side, the eye following the broad path between tall old cypresses and balustrades, up great flights of steps, to a fountain playing immediately below the porch. To appreciate the villa and its setting it must be seen; this poor description may sound cold to English ears, and such a garden in England might be out of place; but during the hot, still, sunny days of a Roman summer what more delightful than to linger among

these crumbling old fountains, these ancient groves where the nightingales sing, and where you are never away from the music of the rippling waters ; the bluest of blue skies over-head, and the scent of many flowers around you, with your Shakespeare, Byron, or sketch-book for companion.

But we dream ; such an ideal life is not for us of this work-a-day world, and yet even near our largest towns there are still sylvan spots where, during the days of our brief summer, we may lie on our backs, and gaze on the fleecy clouds as they sail in the blue over-head.

I climbed the steps of the old garden and wended my way back to the hotel Sibyl, and asked the waiter for coffee and milk. He said there was no milk ; this I thought curious, seeing that I was staying in the house ; upon my enquiry as to whether there would be milk in the morning, he looked hard at me and asked if I were staying the night, and on being satisfied on that point, he said that there was plenty of milk, so all went well. As I sat there under the awning, looking up at the ancient pillars of the temple, the view was not improved by a fat Englishman who stood among them ; he surely would have decamped had he known how he spoiled the effect. Even Marius sitting among the ruins of Carthage was told (we have it on competent authority) by a policeman, to "come out of that," and this man ought certainly to move on. As twilight

fell, the effect changed ; the tourist had left, ghostly figures moved among the gloom of the pillars, and presently the lurid glare of a red light shone out afar over the dark glen ! Something was astir—I would sit and watch—countless lights now showed among the trees, an illuminated snake seemed to be wending over the bridge leading to the glen ; Chinese lanterns bobbed up and down at the tops of poles ; it was a procession of the Ambulance Society, and they were about to witness an illumination of the falls !

A crowd gathered around the base of the temple of the Sibyl, and suddenly the glare of an electric light burst full upon us all, lighting up the old temple as with intense sun-light. The effect as seen from the glen below must have been grand. A brass band came on the scene, followed by many little demons carrying flaring torches, which they held so that the musicians might see their scores. Red, blue, and green lights burned far down in the valley, lighting up the falls in the various colours. The smoke ascended to our platform ; guns were fired, reverberating backward and forward among the rocks, then dying away in the distance.

A monastery on the far hill-side was lit up as though in flames ; fireworks and rockets ascended ; the red glare again shone forth from the temple of the Sibyl ! an old woman with some children stood near the

men who managed the lights, their dusky forms lighted by the fiery glow ! and as the smoke ascended around them and the pillars of the temple, it needed but little effort of the imagination to picture it all as the sacking of Rome ! Suddenly all died away ; the crowd dispersed, and I was left alone to the quiet of a summer starlight night, listening to the music of the everlasting falls.

The dew of early morning was scarcely off the grass when I passed through the city gate, and down the steep road in the delicious cool air. I walked through long stretches of olive woods, where the thick ancient trunks had split up into many smaller trees ; and at the foot of the hill, I came to the gateway leading to the gigantic ruins of the palace of Hadrian, which at one time covered eight or ten miles of land. It contained riches and curiosities from all parts of the then known world, and, since its demolition, has supplied many a fine old statue to the collections of the Vatican and other museums. As I wandered among the ruins, I could not help wishing that I had visited them before seeing the Villa d'Este. There, we had fountains innumerable ; here was a valley of dry bones, for the waters of the ancient lakes and fountains have long since dried up and ceased to flow, and you feel parched, lonely, and dry, among the lifeless but stately ruins. Tall cypress trees mourn over the wreck,

and insects buzz drowsily in the tall grass ; but flowers carpet the ground, and the views of Tivoli and the surrounding hills, as seen through the many trees, are exquisitely beautiful. Imagination carries you back to the time when the palace was full of life and stately elegance, but a melancholy sadness hangs over it all, and you sorely miss the cheerful sound of water.

CHAPTER XI.

THE MONASTERIES OF SUBIACO.

"I like a church, I like a cowl ;
I love a prophet of the soul,
And on my heart monastic aisles
Fall like sweet strains, or pensive smiles ;
Yet not for all his faith can see,
Would I that cowlèd churchman be."

Emerson.

The old post diligence was rattling through the fourteen miles between Civito Romano and Subiaco ; the way lay along the valley of the Anio, amid such scenery as we find in North Wales, but here, mountain peaks are crowned by walled towns and grim old castles, reminding one of the day—not far distant—when brigands roamed the valley and stopped the mail coaches ! Peaceful times have altered this.

We sped along in the heat of the afternoon, four of us passing the time as best we could inside the stuffy old vehicle. There were a lady and gentleman, English Roman Catholics, who had dined under the awning at the hotel Sibyl at Tivoli, and had both smoked cigarettes afterwards ; they now read their Testaments and kept to themselves. Here I dismiss them, for they looked upon me as a man of sin, and as



PART II

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

IN THE YEAR OF HIS AGE SIXTYE

IN THE YEAR OF HIS REIGN

THE FIRST OF NOVEMBER

THE FIRST OF NOVEMBER

THE FIRST OF NOVEMBER

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one who was only to be tolerated upon compulsion. The other passenger was a nice old English clergyman, who, like myself, was travelling to Subiaco to visit the famous monasteries. Subiaco stands imposingly on a hill-top ; down below, the valley stretches far on either hand ; a noble arch, surmounted by a guard tower, spans the river Anio. We bowl past, up the road at the foot of the town, where the humble inn, La Pernice (the Partridge) receives me as its guest. The old gentleman, and the lady who occupied the outside seat on the coach were also at the same inn. This pleased me, for I enjoyed their society and learned not a little from them. The lady had been attending a congress of archæological societies in Rome ; she was all there, and well up in her subject. She had but to look at a building to tell you when it was run up, why it was run up, and by whom. Frescoes and mosaics were as a child's A B C to her. We discoursed on many matters ; she had been in a bad shock of earthquake three months before, when in Rome, and she expects that a volcano will shortly break out at Lake Nemi (date not yet fixed, or I would remain any reasonable time in these parts for its *dénouement*.) She reported that an Englishman had seen lurid flames hovering over the lake, and frankly confessed that had it been an Italian who had seen them, she would not have credited it ; for my part, I cannot take the

testimony of either English or Italian, but must see the flames myself before I believe. After a hasty meal I climbed the streets, or rather the stairs of the town, and from the terraces of the great Papal palace on the summit, I watched the sun sink over the distant mountains, and the red glow stream along the fertile valley, and die away after lingering on the peaks, spreading a crimson blush over half the heavens, and blending gradually with the blue :—

“The weary sun hath made a golden set,
And by the bright track of his fiery car,
Gives token of a goodly day to-morrow.”

Twilight fell, and I returned to the inn to find my friends enjoying high supper, and discussing the morrow's programme. They proposed an early start; and I wondered if they were taking their breakfast over night to save time. They wished to catch the ten a.m. coach back to Civito Romano, and to do so they must rise at 4-30 to visit the monasteries; this, they thought, would probably be too early for me. I gave them to understand that it would be the very thing I should like, and that I would undertake to call them, which I accordingly did. When breakfast time came, there was a little delay, caused by the non-appearance of milk and eggs—the cows and hens not being early risers. However, at 6-15 the procession started, the archæological lady and myself leading the way, while

the old gentleman followed on an ass. The delicious perfumes of an early morning pervaded the air, as we wended our way up the grand gorge of the Anio. At a point high above the right bank of the roaring stream we reached the first of the monasteries, S. Scholastica. We entered the church, but we were too early; the good monks were not yet astir; so we passed on upward, around the old walls, which rise in fortress-like strength, and ascending the steep narrow path, we stood above the old pile, the scene of many a siege and stirring event. We watched the sunlight gild the ancient tower, while the rocky precipices below, illumined here and there by a touch of light, were in sombre shadow. Down below, the grey old town on its conical hill rose into the blue, backed by the yet misty mountains, receding range beyond range to Olevano. I lingered awhile to picture the scene, and then, as the deep-toned bell called to matins, I passed on upward, along the narrow path on the steep mountain ridge, where the old gentleman and his ass, followed by the archæological lady, were toiling on towards the romantic monastery of Sacro Speco. I thanked the worthy couple from the bottom of my heart, that I had left my downy couch, and was out in this glorious morning air.

As the sun ascends, we pass through a narrow portal into the friendly shade of an ancient ilex grove, where

the trees have never been touched by axe or chopper, and are said to have been planted in the fifth century; their moss-grown, twisted trunks have withstood the storms of 1,300 winters! Following the path through the avenue, we reach one of the most renowned monasteries in Italy, for an inscription at the entrance reads "Here is the patriarchal cradle of the monks of the West of the order of S. Benedict." It is the monastery of Sacro Speco (the Sacred Cave). Smaller than those of S. Scholastica, its buildings cling tenaciously to the steep crags high up the mountain side. By a few stone steps we climb to the tiny door-way, and are immediately within the cool corridor, frescoed by Perugino. Here we are met by the courteous Padre don Antonio di Bono, a Maltese, who speaks a smattering of English.

Before proceeding through the monastery, let us learn somewhat of its history. About the year 480, S. Benedict, then a young patrician, fled from the allurements of Rome, and at Subiaco found a lone deep cave in the rocks, high above the foaming Anio. His hiding place was known only to a monk, one Romanus, and each day this good man let down, by a rope from a rock above, half his loaf of bread to S. Benedict. Ravens also were kind to him, and thus the good man was kept alive. Wonderful miracles occurred, and pilgrims flocked from afar! Twelve

monasteries speedily arose amid the mountain peaks, each with only twelve monks, for S. Benedict considered that a greater number led to idleness. Several of these monasteries have disappeared ; that of Sacro Speco was built over the holy cave—where the saint is said to have lived for three years—by his successor Onorato, and a chapel was afterwards built within the cave. Hare says that the present buildings, raised on arches against the rocks, date from the eleventh and early part of the twelfth centuries.

Before we had half seen the wonders of this monastery, it was, alas ! time to depart. The coach would leave Subiaco at ten, and we had engaged seats therein. I could not tear myself away, for I might never visit that glorious valley with its monasteries again, and so I bade good-bye to the old gentleman and the archæological lady, who promised to tell the driver of the coach that I would leave the following day. I little knew what I was destined to go through at the hotel in consequence of my rash resolve.

Padre don Antonio di Bono showed me no little kindness, allowing me to photo. where and what I pleased. After visiting the beautiful frescoed church and the museum, we descended the broad, handsome Scala Santa, where a few pilgrims were on their knees making the toilsome ascent ; and then we reached various chapels and the cave of the saint, where is

now a statue of him with a basket, as a memorial of that lowered to him by S. Romanus. I was afterwards shown the gardens, rising one above the other, small cultivated plateaus reached by flights of stone steps among the rocks, where you can sit and gaze over the valley, and look down on the monastery with its tower and tall cypress trees. In one of the gardens I found a brother who, smitten by the delights of photography, was printing from various negatives which he had taken. The black art has penetrated deeply when you find the cowed monk of the cloister engaged therein. A tame raven hopped about, in memory of good deeds done by its ancestors. The sun was high when I left the brethren, and descended to the large monastery of S. Scholastica. Padre don Antonio di Bono had told me to ask for his brother Attilano, who very kindly showed me through the grand old pile.

S. Scholastica was founded in the 5th century by Abbot Honoratus ; during various periods of its history it has been attacked and burnt by Lombards and Saracens. In 981 it was rebuilt, and dedicated to S. Benedict and his sister, S. Scholastica. In the 12th century its abbots became powerful princes and arbitrary rulers. In Abbot Adhemar's time—1353—seven monks were hung up by their feet, and fires were lighted under their heads. Severities led to a rebellion

in 1454, when the monastery was stormed and many monks massacred. The first printing press used in Italy was established here. The old tower is of the 11th century ; there are three sets of cloisters, of the 11th, 13th, and 17th centuries.

Leaving the monastery, I passed down the valley, and crossing over a high bridge, wandered along a narrow path at a dizzy height above the stream, to a point where I could see the valley and the monasteries. In the foreground were the ruins of a villa of Nero, where, when feasting, he narrowly escaped being struck by lightning. It may be an uncharitable wish, but it seems to me that the world would have sustained no loss had the lightning done its work effectually.

Plates having given out, and a ravenous appetite having asserted itself, I made for "the Partridge," and asked to be supplied with lunch. The girl (quite a nice country girl, but that she breathes too loudly, for you can hear her when she begins to ascend from the kitchen), this girl I say (whether she is going to marry and make happy the driver of the post coach, I know not) reeled off a long speech on to me as I sat defenceless, alone in the saloon, because, forsooth, I had reserved a place in the coach leaving at ten, and had not gone, as I ought to have done. And she had some reason on her side too ; that was the worst of it ! But she need hardly have begun again when I came in to

tea ; besides, I had asked the old gentleman and the archæological lady to say that I was not coming. Moreover, this girl (she is a nice, rosy, comely, buxom, merry country girl) begins at me across the table, and because I understand less Italian than English, and don't follow all she says, she comes round the table and stands over me, talking a little more slowly and a little louder, ending up by holding her hand aloft and rubbing her thumb and forefinger together, which means that I shall have to make some pecuniary compensation. All this is very dreadful ! Then I blame the monasteries and Subiaco for being so charming, and I tell her that I really *will* go to-morrow morning ; she smiles incred-(oh scissors ! here she is again, and I am still alone)—ulously, and evidently thinks that I mean to live here. I fly to the tobacconist who sells the tickets for places, and in walks the driver of the coach (her own particular *vetturino*), who roundly and with warmth turns upon me, while the town looks on in the door-way. I tell him that the monasteries were too many for me, and that I comprehend not much of his jargon. I am made to write out my own ticket—it was well that I learned how to do this when young—then I deposit the money, the paper is handed to me, and all goes well. I hurry off to the Partridge, determined to flaunt the receipt before the face of my fair tormentor, should she upbraid. She, too, has been

out, for I was no sooner seated in the saloon, than I saw the fair Amaryllis rush into the house, and I trembled as I heard her breathing and ascending the stairs ; she approached the table, all smiles, but I was not thus to be deceived—they might be but a cloak for further vengeance, so I brandished a knife in my hand, while with the other I planted the receipt before her very eyes. With a graceful motion, worthy of a Venus, she waved me off (she is a comely maiden, though she does breathe somewhat too loudly, after the manner of a steam engine when tugging a heavy train up a steep incline), and from that moment I knew that I was safe.

Here I must say a word about the white wine of Subiaco. It may be thought—and, indeed, from dark hints which I have received more than once, it has been thought—that I speak too often of the wines of Italy for one who is a teetotaler, when his foot is on his native heath. In a country where the water is often unwholesome, the tea poor, and coffee not always to be had, you are driven to the beverage which nature has provided in the delicious grape juice; and so little spirit is used in the manufacture of the Italian wines, that they are very unlike the heady decoctions that are drunk in England. The white wine of Subiaco is simply nectar; that is the long and short of it, if I perish for my opinion. It will not keep its quality.

when once the bottle has been opened ; it is stored in large glass vessels, and protected from the air by a little oil which floats on the top. This acts instead of a cork, and is dexterously tipped off before the wine is decanted. Nowhere did I find better wine than at the Albergo La Pernice at Subiaco, and, moreover, it was exceeding cheap.

There are other monasteries near the town, besides those I have mentioned. There is the Franciscan monastery, which I failed to enter, for, it being about the hour of three when I reached its closed portal, the brethren were all wrapped in the repose of an afternoon siesta. Later on, I climbed the quaint, crowded old town by its many streets of steps, thereby obtaining grand glimpses of the surrounding country. From the summit, I saw a monastery standing on a hill side a mile away ; and toiling slowly upward, I entered the quiet cloisters, where was a well of delightfully cold water ; it was the monastery of the Capuchins, a young brown-robed brother lowered the copper bucket to a great depth, and I drank from it with a long, strong pull. Descending by a craggy way leading through an olive wood, there were exquisite peeps of the valley with its purple hills and the tower of S. Scholastica showing between the trees.

Ten the next morning came all too soon. Amaryllis took care that I did not miss the coach ; perchance

she wished to have a word with her own particular *vetturino*; at all events she insisted on carrying some of my baggage; and so I left Subiaco, passed by grand old Tivoli once more, and was set down in hot, crowded Rome. The nightingale still sang, but the scientist had left; the season was waning, the English were decamping; Rome was growing unbearable; I could not and would not stay; I must leave at once! but whither? Happy thought: the archæological lady had told me to go to Corneto—to Corneto I would go. Those who care to follow these erratic rambles will hear of it anon.

Subiaco is yet uppermost with me. To artists who revel in the beauties of mountain and valley scenery—to those who love to linger over memories and history of the past; to the jaded, careworn, and to all wanting rest, fresh air, and a quiet, lovely place wherein to spend a holiday, I say go to Subiaco, for you have them all there.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PAINTED TOMBS OF CORNETO.

"I ride in a gloomy land,
I travel a ghostly shore,—
Shadows on either hand,
Darkness behind and before;
Veils of the summer night
Dusking the woods I know;
A whisper haunts the height,
And the rivulet croons below."

Bayard Taylor.

Over a wild, weird, windy waste I passed, as ever and anon I raised my eyes to view a many towered city on a long hill top. It was the ancient Corneto-Tarquinia, "The Queen of the Maremma." Many are the passers-by who see it not, but thanks to the archæological lady whom I had met at Subiaco I was not one of these.

I had left grand old Rome to turn my face homewards, taking train once more over the campagna; then we skirted the sea shore by the desolate, malaria-stricken Maremma, and, instead of pursuing the orthodox route of taking a straight track for Pisa, after passing Civita Vecchia I alighted at the station of Corneto, to take a seat in the small public conveyance about to start for the city of towers, three miles

away. We had a lively time of it under the calico awning of that charabanc ; mating time in a rookery was silence compared to the row that went on as we sat crowded together ; yet in turn, every seat was searched and every cranny hunted through for a missing purse. These Italians gesticulated wildly, all talking at once, and I gathered that a certain lady of troubled face, sitting in one corner, had come down to take train to Pisa, and on arriving at the station had missed her purse, containing about ten pounds' worth of notes. She was returning to Corneto to acquaint her husband with the disaster, and she did not appear to look forward with any pleasure to the interview.

Now the horses pull slowly up the steep hill under the brown crags and walls, and we enter the gateway of the crowded old town. The driver puts me down at a wide desolate doorway, and after climbing the first flight of stairs, I find the entrance to the hotel. It is a large, rambling building, with long suites of rooms and narrow, catacomb passages—a ghostly place. The walls of the large salon are decorated with bad frescoes representing views of Corneto and the Mediterranean. On one of the many tables a frugal repast was soon laid. I ask for coffee and milk, for the air is chill. Soon the inevitable wine bottle appears and my heart sinks at the sight. There is no milk in the town, for no visitor was expected ! No matter—away with the

wine, I will have none of it. Bring me black coffee, bread, butter and eggs. I had read of towns in this part of Italy where they make a hole at the bottom of an egg before boiling it, and at last I have an instance! Each egg has a round protuberance of albumen; the unscientific mind thinks that if boiled whole, the egg will burst, and when I told the landlord that in England we never made a hole in the bottom of an egg before boiling, he looked quite staggered and somewhat unbelieving. It is soon noised abroad that a stranger has arrived, and while I am yet at meat an old gentleman is announced as wishing to see me; he is ushered in, and at once signifies his intention of conducting me to the *tomb* at eight to-morrow morning! It is somewhat sudden, and I start at the ghastly idea, pleading that I am yet young and that I wish to live a little longer. Nothing that I can say has any effect; he simply reiterates that he must and will conduct me to the tomb, nay—to the principal tombs! at eight to-morrow morning, and all for the sum of $2\frac{1}{2}$ lira! My appetite returns, I follow his drift and will hear more of this matter; he is no brigand or assassin, but a guide, as well as the custodian of the museum here. I ask him to take a seat, as I become highly interested. "Let's talk of graves, of worms and epitaphs."

The ancient Etruscan cemetery lies only a mile from the gate of the city; it covers many miles of ground;

and is reported to contain millions of graves. This hill—Monterozzi—is uneven and rough in appearance, but has no stones to mark the tombs. In 1823, Signor Avolta made the first discovery of the necropolis. "In digging into a tumulus for stones for building purposes, he came upon a large block of stone, and raising it, he looked in and saw a warrior stretched on a couch, with a golden crown on his head, and surrounded by rich bronzes ; but as he looked, the corpse vanished from his sight as if by magic, leaving only such objects as could not be thus effected by the suddenly admitted air." (Buckland.)

The genial old man leaves me ; dusk comes on, it is a wild night, and the wind howls round the old house as I issue forth to "prospect." I feel in a humour to battle with the elements and I thoroughly enjoy my walk. I follow the high ancient walls with their numerous towers, and anon reach a great portal where stands Corneto's highest tower—a tall square shaft, which at one time was yet higher than it is now, but either lightning or an earthquake caused the top to fall, and four sculptured horses, which once stood on the summit, disappeared. The jackdaws wheel round its dizzy height ; there is apparently now no door to this tower. The disused Church of S. Maria in Castello stands hard by, and a solitary wayfarer tells me its name ; near to it there is a great arched gateway in the

outer wall of the town ; the huge wooden doors stand open, revealing a waste tract of desolate looking rolling country ; the river Marta is just discernible in the gloom of the valley below, and beyond, a long hill, bare and treeless, stands out against the wild sky. It is the site of the ancient Tarquinia, founded, it is said, by Tarchon, 1,200 B.C. He was possessed of such wonderful wisdom, even from childhood, that he was born with a hoary head. The black clouds scud across the sky and the wind howls in at the old gateway. Continuing my walk within the precincts, I pass numerous square towers standing within the city, now seemingly of no use, but telling of the old days when towns warred against one another. At one time there were a hundred towers standing in Corneto ; now there are but thirty. There are many churches, mostly open, but now so dark that I can see but little as I look in at their doorways : each church has a handsome wheel window in its façade. Long stairways leading up to the old walls, gloomy arches, massive stone houses follow, and now another great gateway, where a road winds down to the treeless plain below ; not a fellow creature in sight ! but the rain beats upon me, and the wind howls, causing the massive doors to groan in ghostly sympathy, and the noiseless bat flits past into the night ! On again through desolate streets, where the oil lamps are yet unlighted ; a muffled, cowed

figure vanishes into a doorway under a dark arch, leaving the road more desolate than before. Yet another doorway, and it grows so dark that I turn down the more frequented streets, after looking into a large church which is still open, but quite empty. It is not inviting, for there are four candles burning in various parts, revealing strange shapes in the dim aisles; there is a creepy fascination about it; but when you feel a little uncertain as to whether a chair is moving noiselessly towards you, or whether you see a huge white candle, or something worse, it is certainly time to quit. And now I reach the haunts of men, and pass low vaulted *trattorias*, full of brigands, drinking and playing cards by the dim light of a suspended lamp. A small church crowded with worshippers comes next; it is illuminated by a hundred candles, and I feel a momentary thrill of comfort and warmth; and so I return to life and enter the hotel, where I am at once asked if I will eat! I wonder what they think I am made of. The wind still howls, the one or two tallow candles feel discouraged, and the lights blow about, just making darkness visible in the lonely salon. A policeman passes through, imparting a feeling of security to the place. I can stand it no longer, and seizing my candle I flee along the dark narrow catacombs and am soon in bed.

Punctual to his time next morning, the old man

found me at breakfast, and we soon departed to visit his museum—a few rooms rich in wonders from the Etruscan tombs. In the lower rooms there are many sarcophagi with life-sized recumbent figures on the lids. Two of these are beautifully sculptured ; one of them—of marble—is still rich with tints of coloured figures, as laid on more than 2,000 years ago. There are round upright massive stone jars containing urns, wherein are calcined bones of the long departed. Upstairs, occupying many rooms, there is a splendid collection of Etruscan vases of black and red pottery, large and small, most of them ornamented with well drawn figures with fine Greek faces. There are helmets, jewellery, daggers, coins and precious stones ; many of the latter engraved. There are two sets of false teeth, set in fine gold frames ; these speak eloquently for the dentists of that far off time. Most of the smaller subjects lie about on tables without cases, one small carved scarabeus was said to be worth £40 ; so it is quite necessary that the custodian should walk round with every visitor who comes to view the museum. Every object there has been found in the tombs within the last twenty years or so, and endless riches probably yet remain within the tombs of the great cemetery.

Now my guide armed himself with bunches of tallow candles, and taking a ponderous weight of keys, we set off for Monterozzi to explore the principal tombs.

After walking about a mile we came to little stone-built gables, each closed by an iron door; these are the entrances to tombs which have been excavated, and have been found to contain mural paintings worth preserving. The guide lit his candles and we descended a flight of steps cut in the rock; some of these ancient flights were short, while others descended further, and the vaults varied in size from eight feet square to forty feet and more. They are all cut out of the solid travertine rock of which the hill is composed; the roofs slant up to the centre. In some instances bodies were laid in troughs hewn in the rock, and the bones lie there yet. All have most interesting coloured paintings on the walls, consisting of scenes both dramatic and hunting, animals, birds, devils, etc. The faces, particularly of the ladies, are in many instances very handsome; the men are painted in browns, but the women are mostly drawn in outline or in delicate colours, and generally in profile, reminding one of Egyptian and Greek drawings. In one large family tomb there is a scene from the infernal regions, where each individual has the name written in Etruscan characters—Pluto, Proserpine, etc.

After seeing a few of these tombs, the custodian suggested that for a further fee of 2½ lira I might see yet more; I was by this time so much interested that I felt glad to go to the extent of five lira, and it is better to do so, for the largest and best come last. I have

already said enough to give an idea of the character of this grand old cemetery—those who are interested in the subject will find a full account of it in Dennis's "*Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria*," where there are also pictures of the chief paintings of the tombs.

The origin of this ancient people is somewhat hid in obscurity. Buckland says :—"Although almost all ancient writers assign a foreign origin to the Etruscans, they are by no means agreed as to their derivation. Herodotus, as well as most of the Greek and Roman historians, calls them Lydians, and says their migration was caused by long-continued famine in Lydia, but they have also been called Greeks, Phœnicians, Canaanites, Lybians, Tartars, Armenians, Basques, Celts, Goths, and Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings."

Whoever they are, they were a superior race, and advanced in various branches of art. As we walk to Corneto I much regretted my slight knowledge of the Italian language, for I wished to question my guide on many of the marvels I had seen. I asked him if he knew Dennis ; he said that he and Dennis were like brothers, and when we returned to the museum—where he allowed me to take a few photos.—he showed me an early edition of Dennis's book. In the evening, as I sat alone in the hotel, I wished I could borrow that book for an hour or two.

The old man now took me to the fine old church of

S. Maria in Castello, of which he keeps the key. It is of the 11th century origin, and contains a tessellated marble floor, carved marble ambo, from which much of the mosaic work has been picked, and also a large font for immersion, many-sided, and of variously coloured marble and with pillars. Until last century there was a handsome cupola over the nave, but it then fell in, and the pillars now lie at one side of the church. Close by, there is a manufactory of Etruscan pottery, where well-made copies of the many noted pieces in the museum can be bought.

As regards weather, the day had been stormy and wet, and I must stay yet another night. This happened to be Friday. Dinner-time came, and the landlord asked me if I would like soup and fish. I knew by experience that it was best to like whatever was offered. Broth came on, then a plentiful supply of salt fish cooked in oil! The feast was over, and glad I felt when the pangs of hunger were satisfied.

The sun sank in a lurid sky over purple headlands and the indigo-hued water of the Mediterranean, and I awoke in the morning with brilliant sunshine streaming in at my windows. I must be up at once, for numerous subjects were parcelled out, and I wished to catch the twelve train to Pisa. I ran round about the city; the fountain sparkled in the great Piazza, as I passed up to the eastern walls and looked over the valley to where

stood the ancient Tarquini. All was brilliant sunshine, the light streamed in at the great open gates and shone on the many old towers, lighting up the yellow rocks upon which the city is built. After careering half round the town, I came in ravenous to a hasty breakfast of coffee, milk, and eggs (with the usual protrusion of albumen at one end), and then passing down the "Street of Towers," I came to the summit of the hill, where stands the old church of Castello. Everywhere sunshine and heat, as different from the weather of the last two days as it could be. The bright blue Mediterranean, flecked with white sails, lay below ; the country around smiled, and all was in the most bewitching garb, as I left the town and descended to the station to take the long journey to Pisa. Before leaving, I entered the shop of a general merchant, and bought a whole halfpennyworth of matches. It was well I did not ask for a pennyworth, for I might have been charged excess luggage—as it was, I received four boxes for my coin.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MARBLE QUARRIES OF CARRARA.

“ Ever been at Pisa ?

Ay, Sir, in Pisa I have often been.”

Shakespeare.

I stayed the night in Pisa, and caught a glimpse of the grand old leaning tower as I left early the following morning for Carrara. I had three dozen plates left, and determined to finish up among the glorious scenery of the marble mountains.

At Avenza, a branch line of three miles ascends the hill side to Carrara, a large and prosperous town, situated among the peaks of marble which extend for miles and miles into the heart of the country, and which have furnished the statuary and many inferior qualities of marble, from the earliest times. It was Sunday morning, and the piazza was crowded with men as I passed through to the comfortable Hotel Posta. No work is done in the quarries on Sunday, and the men had come from all around to meet and talk with each other. The piazza had quite the air of “ high change ” going on.

Before lunch I took a walk up one of the many valleys beyond the town, to a village high up the banks of a rushing stream.

I walked a winsome way,
By a silvery swirling stream,
And the murmuring music of May,
Droned on as a drowsy dream.

I was in the midst of the wild spurs of the Apennines; snowy peaks appeared, towering above the wooded hill sides, and grand masses of cloud rolled around the summits. Hunger called me back, and while sitting at lunch I beheld six or eight other Englishmen seated together at another table. After lunch, one of the company—an American—kindly came to speak to me, and to lend me the *Weekly Times*. He told me that they all live in Carrara, and are in various branches of the marble business. He gave me many kind hints as to procedure, and before night he and another gentleman had offered to conduct me up among the quarries the following morning. This was very kind on their part, for there were certain dangers in going up alone. I knew that I should learn a great deal about the quarries and the marble trade, and that I should enjoy their society. Moreover, one of them was an amateur photographer, and would bring his camera with him. I thanked them, and considered that I had been born under a lucky star. On Sunday afternoon the rain fell in torrents, nevertheless I wandered up among

the quarries ; sheltering now and then in the various tunnels from the heavy rain. There was no danger from blasting, or from rolling blocks of marble, for the men were not working. The effects were grand and wild ; peak after peak, snow-covered or mist-wreathed, loomed up one after the other. Meeting with a man ascending, I asked him if the quarries extended many miles ; he exclaimed an astonished "pew !" and waving his arms abroad, signified by his gestures that the whole of Italy scarcely sufficed to contain them, so vast was their extent. A little more conversation, and he pantomimed the act of drinking, wishing me to make him a present of a small sum of money, but as the knave had already a little more aboard than was good for him, I understood him not, and presently stole out of his company.

Then I struck the marble rail track, and came back by many a twist, and through many a tunnel, thereby seeing much grand scenery. The effects of the clearing mist were very fine, and nearing the town from above, a wild sunset sky, with a glimpse of emerald green sea beyond, together with the many churches and houses, formed a picture long to be remembered. Noticing an old tower, square and picturesque, I hunted it out, and found the exquisite little marble 13th century cathedral, which seemed to me as though it ought to be under a glass case. The façade, with its arcaded

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cornice and rose window, all in mellow-toned marble, is very beautiful, and the window only comes second to that of the cathedral of Orvieto. Every little detail on the outside of this cathedral is worth examination and picturing—there are beautiful little animals, grotesque and otherwise, delicate carvings, and a semi-circular apse; and the interior is equally good. Its marble pillars and walls, dark with age and time, make no pretence at show, and are modestly and unobtrusively simple and old. The baptistery opens out on one side as a chapel, and contains two fonts, one for immersion, and the other, smaller in size, has a cover of different-coloured marbles; there are also carved tombs and tablets.

A few busts stand about the stairs of the hotel, and at the foot, in one corner, there is a marble Venus, exquisite in form and sculpture, which delights me every time I pass her.

* * * * *

The last photo. has been taken! The camera has had its day, and retires into private life! Bradshaw has been studied, with the result that I leave this glorious place, with its six English residents—some of them now old friends of mine—and take train to Genoa in the morning, from thence to proceed straight home.

The marble Venus yet stands by the stairs here. I am loth to leave her behind, and have made an offer for

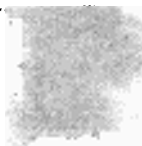
her, but the owner is not in the hotel, so I may not know the result before I depart. I may possibly never see her again.

Tourists who pass by Carrara have little idea what they miss. It is supposed to be the place where marble has been quarried since the beginning of time, but it is not generally known that its mountains and valleys possess some of the wildest and grandest scenery in all this lovely land of Italy, let alone the fact of a thoroughly comfortable hotel, and a social band of Englishmen who welcome their countrymen with open arms.

The two gentlemen who so kindly offered to show me some of the quarries, set off with me after breakfast. We paid two boys one lira each to carry our things for the half day, a good arrangement for them, for they only earn one lira per day at the quarries, and with us they had a little lunch at a *locanda* high up among the mountains, where we all put in for bread, wine and raw sausage; good fare when *excessively* hungry, and *nothing* else to be had. Comparatively few men were working in the quarries; this minimised the danger for us as we walked along and up the deeply rutted, heavy, narrow road, which passes up one of the valleys. Piles of loose marble *débris* shelve down to the roadway, and care is required to keep out of the way of loose stones as they come thundering down the slopes. Then, again,

long teams of oxen come labouring down the track, hauling heavily loaded trucks of marble blocks; and to avoid being run over you must climb nimbly aside till the poor beasts pass, goaded on by their half-savage drivers, who prod them unmercifully with pointed sticks. Another danger to unwarned visitors may result from being too close to some of these patient looking beasts as they stand on the track, for I was shown that some of the tips of the horns were painted red or black, which means that the animals are dangerous. Now and then there are loud warning cries from above; a train has been laid and you must look out for an explosion, and for masses of marble which fly through the air. Many of the quarries are situated high up among the cliff summits, and the men have a long walk up in the early morning to reach their work; there they stay for eight hours, descending by little zig-zag paths to walk home along the track of the marble railway, and to the various villages among the mountains. Some of the men live as far off as Avenza.

After a climb up the valley to a height of 1,100 feet above Carrara, we reached the wildest scenery, where were a large number of quarries and the little *locanda*. I was told that we might wander on for 20 or 30 miles and still be among the marble quarries; there are said to be about 600 in all, and about 10,000 men employed. Some of the quarries were worked in the time of the



long teams of deer come nosing
hunting heavily, behind trucks
avoiding each other by moving
the poles, and so past goading
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They pay for each animal

and the workers

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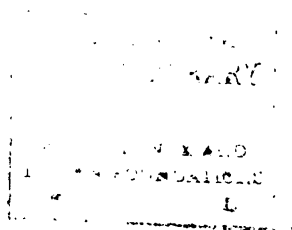
and the workers

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ancient Romans, and I saw marks of their instruments in a certain disused quarry. After our hasty lunch we entered a straight tunnel on a gentle grade of a mile in length, and this we walked through, accompanied by a man with a lamp. We came out in the next valley—called the Canal Grande—here were more mist-wreathed peaks and numerous quarries. A train loaded with marble was about to descend to Carrara, and Mr. F—— stepped aboard to go down on it. Mr. D—— the amateur photographer, kindly walked down the steep valley with me. Presently a long team of oxen, two and two, was seen descending, and we climbed the loose marble on the steep hill-side, thereby obtaining instantaneous shots of the animals as they came lumbering down the track.

The “Lizzr” is an operation not often obtainable by photography, and one attended with great danger to the men employed ; we were fortunate in obtaining a near sight and instantaneous views. It consists of bringing down a huge block of marble from a quarry to the track far below, and it is the work of many men for some hours. A short stake is driven into the débris, and to this the block is secured by ropes two or three inches in thickness ; the block is allowed to slide gently down the slope by pulleys, rollers being continually placed in front to act as a slide ; these are picked up behind as they are left, and handed to a man who sits

on the marble block as it slides ; he hands them down to the men in front, and has no easy time of it. The stone must occasionally be safely stayed while the stake is taken up, and planted lower down as the work proceeds.

Only a few of the quarries furnish the first-class statuary marble, and these are mostly owned by one man, an Italian, who probably makes an income of £40,000 per annum. After seeing all the operations and work entailed in obtaining this marble, we can scarcely wonder that a piece of the finest statuary marble, measuring say four feet in length, may cost £20 or even £30, especially if the piece be guaranteed, for in that case, should a flaw be found as the work of sculpture proceeds, it is thrown aside, and a new piece is furnished, free of cost. Most of the blocks of statuary marble are placed under cover as they arrive from the quarries, as a protection from the influence of the weather.

The second quality of marble is used for monuments and gravestones, and then come table tops and baths, and lastly slabs for paving and various purposes. About the marble-masons' yards in Carrara there are numerous baths lying, thrown aside as worthless ; for after the laborious work of hollowing out, a flaw is found that renders them unfit for sale.

The marble railway (*ferrovia marmifera*) ascends the

mountains to a good height. In some cases the gradients are managed by curves; in others, the train on coming to a terminus, is shunted, and the engine being brought to the other end it proceeds down the next incline, dragging five or six heavily laden trucks. Many of these find their way down to the Marina, to be shipped off to all parts of the world.

On the streams which descend the valleys there are many mills, some of them picturesque and worked by water wheels; here the marble is sawn into slabs. A large block of marble, say five feet in depth, four in width, and six in length, requires to be sawn into slabs of $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in thickness. The saw is composed of long pieces of iron, four inches in depth and without teeth; to this instrument are hung heavy weights, and, as it works backwards and forwards with its many blades, water and sand are continually dropped from above; it is the sand that does the cutting, being worked into the marble by the iron; that which comes out is too fine for second use. A large block may take a week to saw through; the slabs are then ready for shipment. Mr. D—— showed me his mill, and also several blocks marked with his initials lying by the track, ready to be brought down by the bullock carts.

There are numerous sculptors' studios in the town of Carrara; a gentleman took me to see one of the

largest, where much work was in progress ; there were busts of deceased persons—from photographs—figures of all sorts, and sepulchral monuments. In another large studio an order, amounting to about a million lira was in course of execution, all for a new church, to be erected in Buenos Ayres ; this includes Corinthian capitals and much carved work.

A Venus was referred to as standing at the foot of the hotel stairs. In due course she arrived in the Mersey, none the worse for her long voyage. Mr. F—— very kindly arranged for her purchase and superintended the packing and remitting ; she is the work of Caral Lazarini, specimens of whose sculpture are to be seen in Carrara and Florence. She stands a little over three feet, and is a fine copy of Thorwaldsen's "Venus with an Apple."

From Carrara I went to Genoa. Many weeks might be spent in wandering along the beautiful coast, where the mountains descend precipitously, their bases bathed by the blue waters of the Mediterranean. Rapallo is passed, then Santa Margherita, where I spent a few days in 1889, and, as you approach Genoa, the train passes through miles of park-like gardens, and by countless villas belonging to the rich merchants of Genoa, and you steam into the city, at the back of the great palace presented by the people centuries ago, to old Andrea Doria when the republic was in its prime.

Any loose cash which the traveller may have left in his purse can be spent without difficulty in Genoa. There is the exquisite filigree work shown in many of the shops in the goldsmiths' street; there are little marble statuettes, letter weights, and dogs, fresh from the studios of Volterra, besides endless nick-nacks in the fascinating shops of this great city.

The most interesting building to me, in all Genoa, is the old Bank of St. George, standing as it stood six centuries back, down by the harbour on the crowded quay. Three years ago I visited that bank, and obtained permission to photograph the large hall upstairs, where, in the days of its prime the 480 members—who practically governed Genoa—were wont to meet. What a sight met my eyes! The modern Genoese used that hall as a custom house, and I held an indignation meeting with one Antonio, a sailor, who had conducted me upstairs to show me the place. Antonio told me that the authorities of Genoa intended to pull the old bank down, so that the street might be widened. On reaching home, I wrote to Mr. B——, an English banker, who has a delightful country house on a rock resembling that of Monaco in miniature, jutting out into the bay of Santa Margherita; it is one of the old towers of defence altered to suit the requirements of modern social life. I asked Mr. B—— if it were indeed true that the Genoese were

about to pull down the old bank ; he kindly wrote back that he and others were using every endeavour to prevent such an act of vandalism. True, the old building considerably narrows the busy street down by the harbour, but, surely, some course might be found whereby its ancient stones could be left intact.

I now hurried to the spot, not having seen it for three years. Scaffolding was raised around its ugly, old, barred, prison-like windows, and I thought that its days were numbered ; I asked whether demolition or restoration were intended, and was told that the honoured pile was about to be transformed into a museum. The front part is not so ancient as the rest of the building, and, without touching the great hall upstairs, the lower part is to be cut away, and the upper is to be supported on pillars, so that carts may pass underneath.

I ascended the stairs, and found workmen all over the building, engaged in restoration and alteration ; the great hall was empty of its goods and its custom house clerks, and the statues remained unharmed.

From the works of Hare and Bent I cull the following history of the building.

It was erected by the first Doge, Guglielmo Boccanegra, as is attested by the inscription.

“Guglielmo Boccanegra, whilst he was captain of this city, ordered in the year 1260, that I should

be built. After this was decreed, Ivo Oliviero, a man divine for the acuteness of his mind, adapted me with great care to whatever use should then or ever after be applied to me by the captain."

The upper hall is surrounded by two ranges of grand life-size statues of Genoese heroes—Spinola, Doria, Fieschi, etc., the upper row standing, the lower seated.

"One had founded a hospital, another bought off a tax on provisions, another had kept his shares in the bank to provide a dower for poor maidens, etc. For those who only bequeathed 25,000 francs to the State, a simple commemorative stone was thought sufficient, whilst their more liberal brethren, whose donations amounted to 50,000 francs, were honoured with a half-figure bust. All those who gave 100,000 francs were represented standing in a row over the heads of the most generous of all who exceeded this sum, and who were placed in a sitting posture close to public gaze and admiration."

When I saw the hall three years ago it was dirty and neglected, and the memory of Genoa's greatest men was slighted, for not only was it full of merchandise, but on the walls between the statues there hung advertisements of "Allen's Hair Restorer," and of "Jacob's Sarsaparilla!" Those who may be fortunate enough to visit Genoa during the next few

years will probably find the hall in a state of cleanliness, and the statues cared for as they should be.

If Italy would learn a lesson from this tardy act of Genoa, and instead of sweeping away her grand old monuments, would tend them with a veneration and loving care, how much beauty might yet be spared!

I left Genoa in the morning, and travelling over Mont Cenis, breakfasted in Paris the following morning, and reached London just in time to see "Henry VIII." at the Lyceum.

"Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned,
From wandering on a foreign strand!"

Scott.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

Spring at the Italian Lakes.

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up to TUSCULUM.

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Villa.

At the Crater Lakes of ALBANO and NEMI.

CIVITA CASTELLANA, surrounded by Ravines.

Deserted Roman City of FALLERI.

MONTE SORACTE and the Monks.

VELLETRI and the Volscian Mountains.

NINFA, a Town beautiful in decay; ruined, forsaken, and creeper
grown; the home of the snake, bat and owl.

A run to NAPLES: Over the Bay to SORRENTO. Up Vesuvius;
the rolling lava stream.

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EXCURSION TO CAPRAROLA.

MONTEFIASCONE, AND DOWN TO LAKE BOLSENA;
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SEJNI.—ON ITS CRAGS.

THE MONASTERY OF MONTE CASSINO.

CORNETO.—ETRUSCAN TOMBS 2400 YEARS OLD;
MUSEUM, SARCOPHAGI, ETRUSCAN POTTERY.

CARRARA.—MARBLE QUARRIES; GRAND SCENERY
OF THE MARBLE MOUNTAINS. A MARBLE VENUS
COME TO LIGHT.

